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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

BY

MARY SMITH,

(M. S.)

SCHOOLMISTRESS AND NONCONFORMIST.

LONDON: BEMROSE & SONS.
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CONTENTS.

	Page
The Snow Storm	1
February	4
Home	8
An Old Scene: Oxfordshire	10
Willie	11
Look up!	13
Life's Changes	15
The Old House	20
King John of Bohemia	23
Lydia Lee	25
Our Village	27
On Hearing the Chimes of Carlisle Cathedral at Midnight	29
May Musings	31
Hannah Brown	33
My Mother-Sister	35
"Let in more Light"	38
The Last Words of Admiral Carter in the Battle of La Hogue	41

Page

Mary and Me (Oxonian Dialect) - - - 43
Under the Elms (Do.) - - - 44
One of Many - - - - - - 47
By the Fireside - - - - - 49
Spring Pictures: Lengthening Days - - - 51
On Hearing the Curfew in Oxfordshire - - 53
Shadow and Light - - - - - 54
A Sketch of Life - - - - - 57
The Stranger - - - - - - 62
Sunshine and Shadow - - - - 63
The Dead Rose - - - - - 65
A Summer Scene: Oxfordshire - - - 68
To Miss Lydia Sutton on her Tenth Birthday - - 69
Opportunity - - - - - 72
Oliver Cromwell - - - - - 74
The Deformed Child - - - - 77
Old Memories - - - - - - 80
Live while you live - - - - - 82
Evening—Autumn - - - - - 84
Harvest Time - - - - - 86
Little Maggy - - - - - - 88
Autumn - - - - - - 91
November - - - - - - 93
A Winter Woodland - - - - 95
What to Do - - - - - - 97

Page

Do thy Work - - - . - 102
To the Rev. W. J. T. - - - - - 106
My Father's Epitaph - - - - 108
The Apple Gathering - - - - - 108
Fallen Leaves - - - - - 110
The Robin's Song in September - - - 112
Stand and Strive - - - - - 114
White Roses - - - - - - 116
To a Polyanthus late in November - - - 118
The New Year—1882 - - - - - 120
Our Dog Rough - - - - - 122
A Hymn - - - - - - 123
The Present - - - - - - 125
Simple Flowers - - - - - - 129
On John Bright's Election - - - - 131
Keep Heart - - - - - - 132
Religion - - - - - - 134
To the River Eden - - - - - 135
A Tale of a Giant - - - - - 137
Life Similes - - - - - - 140
Be Cheerful - - - - - - 141
Talents - - - - - - - 143
The Good of Gladness - - - - 145
The Angel of Life - - - - - 148
What to Trust - - - - - 150

Page

Hymn - - - - - - - - 152
A Moral from Nature - - - - - 154
"Woman's Claims" - - - - - - 156
Gladstone's Axe - - - - - - 159
April Rain - - - - - - - 161
To-day - - - - - - - 163
Columbus - - - - - - - 165
October - - - - - - - 170
Ethelflead, the Mercian Queen - - - - 172
Winter Floods - - - - - - 174
PROGRESS - - - - - - 179

THE SNOW STORM.

A TALE OF THE FELLS.

The cotter's children are at the pane,
  Counting the flakes as they fall;
But the mother looks up the long white lane,
  Anxiously over them all.

She sees the sun set round and red,
  Behind the poplars bare,
And the white mist cover the old tower's head,
  And her heart is fill'd with care.

The shepherd's dog clings to his heels,
  As they silently speed through the snow;
And the carter follows with soundless wheels,
  Bowing and bending low.

She sees it all, and her heart sinks low,
  For her boy, who is scarcely eight,
Is over the fells, the quarries below,
  Without either guide or mate.

He went at morn, when the sun shone out,
  And the birds were twittering sweet,
And the brown hens chuckled and fluttered about,
  And the road was alive with feet.

And now it is getting late and dark,
  And not a star appears,
Nor chip of moon, which might serve as an ark,
  In a night so dark with fears.

Yet she stands at the pane where she long has stood,
  But now she has lost from her sight
The tower and the trees, and her chilling blood
  Grows cold as the snow flakes white.

And her boy comes not, nor is there a sound
  O'er all that waste of snow
Of human-kind; and with quick rebound
  Her thoughts into actions flow.

And now she is over the moor, and has crossed
  The brook and the grim white wood,
And has passed the tarn all white with frost,
  And the dam where the old mill stood.

And oft she has stood with strained ear,
  And oft she has shouted wild;
But nought has come back to her heart but fear—
  No token of her child.

But the mother's heart knows no despair,
  And over that pathless deep,
Which the bravest heart might quail to dare,
  She still her way doth keep.

Yet in vain she wanders! for in the drift,
  Her boy, with claspèd hands,
And eyes still calm, and still uplift,
  A pallid phantom stands!

His fair hair, like a sweet dead flower,
  Flies fitful in the blast,
And his parted lips, all void of power,
  Are sealed with a silence fast.

And nevermore will his mother kiss
  Those sweet cheeks here below,
For she lies—O heaven! in woe there's bliss—
  Untroubled in the snow.

FEBRUARY.

The fierce wind has its own wild way,
  'Tis February! hard and fast;
'Tis February! loud-tongued say
  The driving rains, the roaring blast.

"The days are creeping out," I hear
  The passers saying in the street;
When eves are fair and mornings clear,
  But winter tarries—not so fleet.

He stays and still keeps clear his horn,
  And sounds it well, as who should say,
"Take care! I fear me not your scorn,
  You'll have me yet for many a day."

With nature sweet he bears it high,
  A braggart threat'ning face he wears;
If he must die, his corpse shall lie
  In warrior state, he loud declares.

He'll have no garlands round his head,
  No foolish trappings of young flowers;
But better fitting, these instead—
  The missiles keen of his own hours.

Snow, hail and rain shall mark where lies
  His corpse when dead; and madcap Spring—
The virgin with the changeful eyes—
  Shall hear his loud artillery ring.

So, fraught with wrath, old Winter dies
  'Mid February's changeful hours,
And his mild child, with streaming eyes,
  Spreads on his grave her first-born flowers.

She brings the snowdrop pure and white,
  The saintly flower that springs where'er
The poor man makes his doorway bright,
  The flower that's cherish'd everywhere.

The crocus bright, all flower, no leaf,
  She also brings, its smiling grace
Betokening the swift relief
  Of nature and a changèd face.

These, with green blades and buds, she brings—
  The sweetest bouquet of the year—
And on her father's white cairn flings,
  With many a sigh, and many a tear.

And for his requiem wild she calls,
  The hoarsest winds that pipe to blow—
The stormy legions whose shrill brawls
  Through February's dark hours flow.

Long, long their music hoarse prevails,
  Long, long they beat the loud refrain;
Their mystic dirges and wild wails,
  Still finished, still begun again.

But life prevails as flow the days,
  And there are hours when winter seems,
'Mid February's bright'ning rays,
  Forgotten quite—a dream of dreams.

The winds are hush'd, the streams are still,
  The sun shines out above the clouds,
And mating birds the soft airs fill
  With piercing notes, in lively crowds.

But these sweet hours, the Spring's first smiles,
  Are all impermanent and rare;
Loud rattle still the cotter's tiles,
  And still his beds are bleak and bare.

But through it all there's something strange,
  Or dark, or fair; there's felt to be
A quickening sense of a sweet change,
  A stir in bird and blade and tree.

The power has fled which held in death
  The living world, and free again,
With her reviving, bright'ning breath,
  Sweet nature fills both hill and plain.

'Tis her dear hour! and the sweet Spring,
  Her maiden charms more fair each hour,
Unfolds beneath her fostering wing,
  And grows, as grows the ripening flower.

Grows, and makes green the fields, and fills
  The morns with glittering, gladd'ning light;
Grows, and makes fair the russet hills
  With long sweet lines of sunshine bright.

And earth is comforted, and throws
  The long white streamers of her grief—
Her icicles and trailing snows—
  Away, and dons instead the leaf.

But in the air the bursting trees
  Will toss their heads sore crush'd and torn,
Full many a time, and the loud breeze
  Scream wild again, ere March be born.

Yet Hope is with us, and the light
  Is growing fast; and at their roots
The flowers are feeling that delight
  That into life and sweetness shoots.

And soon with glad accord we'll hear
  The swallow twittering at the eaves;
And see, as glad, a sight to cheer—
  A world all clad with flowers and leaves.

And Spring, sweet Spring! the fair! the bright!
  She who for lovers builds sweet bowers;
She who brings day and choirs the light;
  The hopeful still, shall still be ours.

HOME.

Here everything that meets my eyes,
  From the long grass to the blue sky,
Seems of myself a part, and lies
  Familiar unto heart and eye.

The sunshine calm upon the wall,
  Which seems to lie for ever there,
The roadside elms, high over all,
  Unaltered in their beauty fair;

The big red roses at the gate,
  Glowing like summer's heated face,
The lavender, their tender mate,
  Mingling with theirs its fragrant grace;

The open door and cheerful hum
  Of household voices in free talk,
The sound of feet that go and come
  Upon the straggling old stone walk.

The same, the same as long ago,
  When I a child was wont to tread
The village paths in joy or woe,
  To school with those who now are dead.

The very air, as then, is sweet
  With lore that never verse expressed—
The lore of love which eyes that meet
  In home communion know the best.

The very stones around that door,
  The very birds that wing the air,
Just as they were long years before,
  Seem something more than earthly there.

And yet—and yet a sadness there
  Broods over all where'er I stray,
And silent voices fill the air,
  Which long from earth have passed away.

Old faces crowd the open doors,
  And meet me on the lonely way;
Old forms still tread the old home floors
  Familiar in the open day.

'Tis the old house, but peopled sad
  With forms that earth no more will see;
And never more shall summer glad
  Brighten, as once, that home for me,

AN OLD SCENE: OXFORDSHIRE.

Here's the old scene; the earth stands fast,
  The changeful years have rolled amain,
But here, as in the dear old past,
  Are the green hills and fields again.

And in the pleasant vale below,
  The village and its old grey tower,
Just as they were long years ago,
  In life's young opening hour.

The long white road adown the hill,
  The tall old elms the road beside,
The cornfields that the landscape fill,
  From year to year the same abide.

The villagers that come and go
  With herds of kine or loaded wain,
The sheep that pasture far below,
  Seem all the same—the same again.

The changeful years seem powerless here,
  The green fields grapple fast the sky,
And on their bosom, here and there,
  In solid rest the farmsteads lie.

The very flowers the road beside,
  The fragrant woodbine, the wild rose,
And gadding bramble, here abide
  The same in their bright summer shows.

The same, and will the same remain
  To other eyes as now to-day,
When I no more shall come again,
  Or tread again this dear old way.

Our little lives are but a span,
  Which like a shadow still declines,
While nature greater, less than man,
  Blooms on and the sun shines.

WILLIE.

Willie's eyes are bright, bright brown,
  Willie's brow is round and fair,
O'er its sides his curls hang down—
  Curls of soft brown shining hair.

Willie scarce can talk at all,
  Yet his tongue is never still;
Through the house his stories small
  Every ear must hold and fill.

Willie often comes to me
  With an upturned, earnest face,
Lays his arms upon my knee,
  And questions me with childish grace.

Wants to know who made the sky?
  When they die, where birdies go?
Whether Heaven is *very* high?
  And why God sends the cold, cold snow?

Of a sage the truest type,
  Answering him as best I can;
He with other questions ripe,
  Still keeps on as he began.

Then I smooth his curls and press
  To my own his cherry lips,
And the thoughts I can't express
  His small eagerness eclipse.

And like bird or butterfly,
  He again flies off to play;
His small heart with rapture high
  Beating blithely all the day.

God bless Willie! still I pray;
  Keep him safe from worldly snares,
Make him good and glad alway;
  Still a lightener of cares.

And if spared to be a man,
  May he still, even then as now,
Bear through time's uneven span
  Heaven's calm signet on his brow.

LOOK UP!

Daily the Angels paint
  Upon the walls of space
Frescoes, of holiest form,
  To lure to light Man's face.

And daily upon those walls
  May be seen a holy hand,
Tracing words of love, of blessing,
  That all may understand.

Heaven's holy missionaries,
  The stars, come every night,
And talk of God and destiny
  In the language of light.

And the moon, like a saint in white,
  Motions men to hear
Their holy words, whose music thrills
  Through every rolling sphere.

And walk we with downcast eye
  Through this beautiful hall of heaven,
Through this gorgeous gallery, which God,
  To inspire the soul, has given?

Walk we with downcast eye?
  Are these wondrous words unread?
These voices all unheard? O, Man,
  Lift, lift thy bowed head!

Look up! The shadow of thy brow
  Hides even thy view of earth:
O, Man, that shadow reproacheth thee
  In words of satiric mirth!

Look up! all things are looking up,
  Nor Faith alone points on high:
There are fingers of faith beneath thy feet
  Pointing thee to the sky.

Look up! exclaims the flower,
  As it struggles through the sod;
Yea, Nature stands with lifted eyes,
  And points to heaven, to God!

LIFE'S CHANGES.

Life has been likened to a dream,
A changing sky, a passing stream,
Nor without reason; there's no day
But from us something takes away
Our hearts found rest in; there's no hour
But with it brings the cruel power
To smite our hopes. Our joys all lie
At the mercy of time's fickle sky,
And every good that makes the way
Of life less irksome, every ray
Of love or friendship—best of things
Heaven gives, earth knows—has ready wings
To fly with, there is nothing true
Unto its promise, howe'er few
Our pleasures, they each one are doomed
To drop their leaves, or be entombed
By time's rough winds; all that we hold
The dearest things our souls enfold,
Must go, none lives who has not wept
O'er treasures lost he would have kept.

I've known the time when hope has cast
Such spells of joy across my past,
That all life's ills and all times power
To weaken purpose, o'er the hour

Have been as nothing, and my eye
Entranc'd with a futurity,
Born of such moments, wrapt has seen
(The bars of lowly life between),
Such glory, such transcendent hues
Of life exalted, that the dews
Of its supreme divinity,
Have purified and made of me
A being than myself far higher,
Flaming with most intense desire—
By giving up all good, by strife—
On some great aim to lay a life
Thus raised as then, it seemed to me
To a sure immortality.

But ah! since then great woes have made
A difference in me, with the aid
Of great endeavour, I now make
Attempts to aspire, just for the sake
Of satisfying thoughts which gall
My soul with most outwearying thrall
Of hard reproach. I no more feel
That ecstacy which is the seal
Of certain glory; o'er my head
And heart there is a something spread
Which numbs my spirit, dims my eye,
So that my thoughts have now to ply
Their oars for hours, to gain a sight
Of things beyond the common light

Of earthly day; the thrilling fire
Which pulsed my heart in moments higher
Than now I know; the throbbing sense
Of power, almost Omnipotence,
Are gone, and a sad aching chill
Of dull indifference, with a will
Too strong for mine, belords my hours,
Shutting all doors upon those powers
Which once endow'd life with a leaven
Of glory, which changed earth to heaven.

Ah, this is life, time smiles and shows
Hues fair and fine; white, gold and rose,
O'erlay the future of our youth,
But soon we find the unpleasing truth,
That life is *not* all holiday,
Nor all its colours—colours gay,
That threads of sad and sober gray
Run through it all.

Love touches life, and all the dim
Dark lowering clouds about the rim
Of daily thought, burn, flush and glow
With radiance wond'rous; e'en the low,
Dull, dreary, joyless round of earth,
Daily trod o'er, shows gleams of worth,
Of beauty, of delight, of power
To bless, till in such happy hour
Unthought, unknown; the meanest sense,
Under this charmed influence,

Is heightened, brightened, stronger, higher,
All shapes, all forms, haloed with fire
Celestial seem; the lovers meet,
Thoughts are for words too rare—replete
On such occasions, every pore
Speaks mysteries of a thrilling lore,
Of wordless bliss, it seems that they
Can never know another day
Of ill or grief.

Oh, is it so? Does time ne'er dry
The springs of love? Is there no eye,
That once was happy, very sad?—
Too sad for any to make glad
Again on earth? No cheek so pale,
That all the skilfullest efforts fail
To bring it bloom, and but to die!
Is the only hope beneath the sky?

Ah, truth's too sad for words to show
Its height and depth, time spares we know
No bonds whate'er—the most complete
Felicity that e'er made sweet
The life of man, is but a reed,
Which any chance tone, look, or deed
May break—doth break. To-morrow's sun
Will shine a different world upon.
The feelings which, like bright stars, shone
Over our lives in years long gone,

Have dimmed and darkened, and the hues
Of time, and the cold damping dews
Of age will change from bright to grey
The joys which bless our hearts to-day.

Is there no hold, then, anywhere,
To which in hours of woe and care,
When faileth hope in every thing
That man can reach, the soul may cling?
No rock amid the seas of life,
No tree amid the storms of strife,
Nothing round which the heart can fold
Its pure desires? which aye will hold
Its place and being ever free
Of all life's mutability?

There is—'tis this Celestial Love!
That star's all change's rounds above,
Hold fast to that, it never fails,
Before all winds its certain sails
Will be secure. For truth and good
And mercy bow not to the mood
Of time or change, and love of these
Is love celestial. There's no ease
For the heavy woes which change and time
Tax hearts with, in this nether clime
Of sin and sorrow: but in clinging
Fast to the good, the hearts aye bringing,

For pity's needs, fast to the power
Which truth can give to every hour
Of those who love her, and as fast
To justice. Justice's love at last.

THE OLD HOUSE.

The old house! the old house!
  How altered and how strange!
One voice of love is silenced there,
  And oh, how great the change;
The rose and honeysuckle still
  Climb brightly up the wall,
But one dear face appears no more,
  And shadow rests on all.

The old house! the old house!
  The home of years gone by,
I thought it once the fairest spot
  Beneath the broad blue sky;
It had no shadow then; its light—
  The sunshine of kind eyes—
Made every heart about it bright,
  And blest both earth and skies.

The old house! the old house!
  I little thought of yore
That I could dwell so far from it,
  An inmate there no more;
Or that the swift revolving years—
  Then all too slow for me—
Would write upon its pleasant walls
  Their Ichabod so free.

The old house! the old house!
  Time was when I could sit,
A pondering child of fancies wild,
  And dream sweet dreams in it;
Or in the orchard 'neath the trees—
  With brothers now grave men—
Pile bonfires to the very boughs;
  Time brought no troubles then.

The old house! the old house!
  Bright in those times of old
Peep'd forth in crystal hood demure
  The snowdrop from the mould,
And columbines and daffodils—
  They'll never be forgot—
A glory like to heaven's brought
  Into each shady spot.

The old house! the old house!
  No sunbeams half so bright
Fall now as in those springs of old
  Filled all its panes with light;

Nor do there ever swallows flit
  Round any pear tree bough,
Like those that there rang out their chimes—
  Spring's no such music now.

The old house! the old house!
  Even the very night
Fell fairer there, while round its roof
  The bats renewed their flight;
And as we paced its doors before,
  Or knelt for the calm prayer,
No pain then touched our hearts as now,
  Of morrows filled with care.

The old house! the old house!
  Will e'er again those bands,
Once knit so close, unite again,
  And hands again clasp hands?
And eyes meet eyes, serene and mild,
  As there of old they met?
And the old peace replace—blest thought—
  Life's fever and life's fret?

KING JOHN OF BOHEMIA.

[Johann was blind but he had good ideas in war. At the battle of Crecy, on the 24th of August, 1346, he advised we know not what; but he actually fought, though stone blind, tied his bridle to that of the Knight next him, and charged in like an old blind war-horse, kindling madly at the sound of the trumpet, and was there, by some English lance or yew, laid low. They found him on that field of carnage (field of honour too, in a sort,) his old blind face looking very blindly to the stars; on his shield was blazoned a plume of three Ostrich feathers, with *Ich Dien* (I serve) written under. —*Carlyle's Frederick of Prussia*, Vol. I., pp. 168-9.]

King John of Bohemia, old and blind,
From battle would not be left behind,
His steed to another's rein he had tied,
And old and blind he the foe defied,
"*Ich Dien*" the word he wore.

"I serve," his motto, and nobly kept,
He might have stayed at home and wept
His froward fate, or drunk his wine
In courtly quiet, with soul supine,
But a brave man needs must fight.

Face to face he met the foe;
Firing the young with his hairs of snow,
And kindling in all with those sightless eyes
The glory of glorious destinies,
As our thoughts can well conceive.

That night among the slain he lay,
Among the brave who lost that day
His pure white plume of feathers three,
And his motto kept so faithfully,
    Distinguishing him dead.

No word remains to tell how he fought,
But more than the arm is a brave man's thought,
And an heroic will, will work its way,
Whatever chances its fate may sway,
    There's power in a brave man's breath.

Thank God for the brave! the world's great need
Is a generation of noble seed,
Men brave as the brave of the olden time,
To help the world to its glorious prime,
  For its best hath yet to be.

Thank God for the brave! great deeds ne'er die,
Their memories still in the world's heart lie,
And sure again in the hour of need
The deeds of heroes will heroes breed;
    There's nothing noble dies.

Our lives are beleaguered and ravaged by foes,
Ravaged of hope, of power, of repose,
And to us, too, remains but contempt or fight,
Let us then, our weaknesses despite,
    Resolve to do or die.

We have not a Crecy's battle to brave,
Our fight's with the foes that the soul enslave
With fear and falsehood, and unjust thought,
But if bravely that battle be not fought,
We shall gain no other field.

LYDIA LEE.

It was long ago, in my youth's bright prime,
That I loved sweet Lydia Lee;
But she was rich, and my love was a crime,
For I was of low degree.

So I kept it all in my own brave heart,
For I said, "She shall not scorn me,
Nor turn her steps from my path apart,
For fear of my worship free."

But when I saw her pure bright face—
O it was fair to see!—
Devout on Sundays in her place,
Hard seemed my doom to me.

And when beside her stately form
Another youth walked free,
Within my heart there rose a storm,
That all things changed to me.

Not long, and bells rang out amain,
  And folks they said to me—
All ignorant of my heart's pain—
  "She's married—Lydia Lee."

"She's married!"—Heavens! what power have words!—
  That night my agony
Stilled, as the lightening stills the birds,
  All life's sweet hopes in me.

But I rose up; I did not die—
  God's hand it strengthened me,
And set me, as the years flew by,
  From my great sorrow free.

And now I am rich, and at my board
  There sits sweet Lydia Lee;
For death untimely seized her lord,
  And then she pitied me.

OUR VILLAGE.

Tall elms adown the village grow,
  Soft with the sunshine mingling shade,
The same as when long years ago,
  A child I in their shadows played;
And round the farm house by the road,
  Unchanged like them by time's decline,
Diffusing far their fragrant load,
  Bloom the red rose and columbine.

Stretching beyond, far scattered stand
  Meek cottages with casements low,
Wrapped soft in their own shadows bland,
  Or sleeping in the noontide glow;
Their wickets small are bordered sweet
  With marjoram and mint and thyme,
And in the golden summer fleet,
  Faint woodbines round their thatched roofs climb.

Rude beauty hides on every hand,
  Through long defiles of orchard walls,
And trees that in their glory grand
  Stand like time's trancèd sentinels;

Nature's sweet footprint, ever fair,
  Up the irregular road beams bright,
Its rainbow glories everywhere
  Softening the shadows with their light.

And 'mid it all, Time's steadfast peer,
  Stands the gray tower in placid rest,
Its precincts pure with many a flower
  Of old familiar sweetness drest;
Beneath it indistinct in death,
  In tenements of native earth,
Lies all the life that once found breath
  Amid these scenes, or here had birth.

Link'd to a life of later date,
  Hard by the Meeting stands demure,
Its humbler form and simpler state
  Drawing the lowly to its door;
Around it tranquil in the shade,
  White roses grow and lilies sweet,
And when the Sabbath prayers are made
  They mingle with them incense meet.

But meaner needs has human life,
  The village has its smithy still,
And here the smith in sultry strife,
  Beats by the road his anvil shrill,
To nature's sounds incessant sweet,
  Light'ning the air around him free,
He adds each day, in dust and heat,
  Brave labour's broader symphony.

Upon the Cherwell's reedy rim,
  In cheerful peace this village lies;
But War, with fingers gaunt and grim,
  Has written here her histories.
Her victims those she here laid low,
  One race and nation all embound,
The country in its strain of woe,
  Here struggling with a tyrant crowned.

ON HEARING THE CHIMES OF CARLISLE CATHEDRAL AT MIDNIGHT.

Do iron tongues articulate
  Those soul-entrancing tones?
Or, has mute silence given leave
  To the carved lips of stones?

Those olden saints, with uplift eyes,
  And visages so calm,
Those saints in the Cathedral porch,
  Sing they this sacred psalm?

Or, has mysterious midnight
  In vigil thought of Him,
And paused to celebrate that thought
  In holy choral hymn?

As such, or as a chaunted prayer
  From some far spirit sphere,
Or, as the voice of love, those tones
  I can do nought but hear.

And yet they are the self-same sounds,
  Which, like some gentle word,
Fall on the distracted ear of day,
  Unnoticed and unheard.

Like voices long unregarded,
  Till, in some dark sad hour,
They're heard ; ah ! then we wonder
  At their beauty and their power.

Oh, wond'rous chimes, peal evermore,
  With rich cathedral swell,
From out the God-built towers of time,
  More deep than tongue or bell.

And yet unheard ! Oh, is it strange
  We're poor in thought, and sad ?
Who hath an ear, knows that these tones
  Make rich, and wise, and glad.

MAY MUSINGS.

"Here are the leaves again;" it seems
But like a dozing between dreams,
Since white with bloom, with young leaves green,
Those trees, as now, last year were seen;
The same blue sky, the same soft air,
And bloom and beauty everywhere,
As cloud and storm had ne'er been known,
Nor sound of a less happy tone.

Earth lacks not that which hope inspires,
Nor that which feeds devout desires;
If nature in dark mood bereaves
The fields of flowers, the trees of leaves,
Saddens the world with cloud and rain;
Sun, leaves, and flowers are sure again;
Where floods have flow'd, where laid deep snow,
The fairest flowers again will grow.

Nor lacks earth that which bringeth joy,
Young children—many a girl and boy—
In sunny fields, gathering sweet flowers
To-day, will live delightful hours;

Find in the fragrant grassy lane
Those joys which seldom come again—
Joys which through want, woe, care, and crime,
Will still survive and lighten time.

And hoary men with failing eyes,
Will feel new life beneath these skies;
The trees 'neath which they play'd when boys,
The streams they fish'd in all the joys
Of a once happy time, through years
Of care and labour, strife and tears,
Memory will bring back, 'rich'd with rays
Of thoughts, that souls to heaven raise.

Beauty brings bliss to every heart,
No soul but hath in joy its part;
If difference be, 'tis in that mind
Whose thoughts are all of purest kind;
Or in that heart that seeks to raise
The low, by love, from error's ways;
To such, on days like these, the hours
Bring joys of higher, holier powers.

O, welcome spring! O, welcome flowers!
O, welcome all that bringeth hours
Of brighter time for those who bear
A lot of more than common care;
Who at laborious toils confined,
Have sorrows that bow down the mind,
And fears of want, and fears of ill,
Their calmest hours with dark thoughts fill.

O, dear to them the sun which gains
Its way through e'en the lowliest panes,
Brightening the gloomiest hearth with light,
That leads sad souls to different sight,
To cheerful hope, to brighter thought,
To trust in truths by patience taught,
To love, to peace, to faith in good,
To life of a diviner mood.

HANNAH BROWN.

Hannah Brown wore a face of woe,
  A face like the sky in November weather;
'Twas sad at morn—night found it so—
  A dolorous visage altogether.

Her neighbours in the street she passed
  With eyelids drooped, and meagre greeting;
For all her thoughts were inward cast,
  Sad brooding o'er her own heart's beating.

And Hannah Brown was still the same,
  She did not heed the new-born daisies,
Nor cuckoo sounding its own name,
  Far through the green wood's brightening mazes.

Nor did she don a ribbon bright,
  Or change her dress to suit the season;
That might have made her heart more light,—
  But Hannah was not led by reason.

A woman lone, her mother's heart—
  Such many have who are not mothers—
Craved tiny hands the wave to part
  That rolled between herself and others.

At last the seraph that she sought—
  Sought inarticulate and blindly—
Came to her—to her arms was brought
  A babe, and then her life ran kindly.

Then the blue heavens and purple earth,
  For her were all anew created;
And in her a new soul had birth,
  Which made her feel to all related.

And then she changed her sad attire,
  And something too of fashion flaunted,
And words of love and kind desire
  Flowed from her lips like strains enchanted.

Her neighbours held their peace and smiled,
  Some blessed God that he'd given her pleasure,
When they beheld her and the child,
  And saw the miracle's sweet measure.

But her own meek magnificat—
  The handmaid of the Highest lowly
Where'er she walked, where'er she sat,
  Rose up to heaven like incense holy.

Like a bare ruin'd wall, sweet wreathed
  With flowers of some soft wind's sowing,
The pure young life that round her breathed,
  Set her wan countenance a-glowing.

And she had pity for all woes,
  And love for everything that liveth;
And men said, "Wheresoe'er she goes,
  God bless her! for she comfort giveth."

But Hannah knew not what she did,
  It was the child that wrought within her;
Yet doing the behests love bid,
  She saved from sorrow many a sinner.

MY MOTHER-SISTER.

Sweet mother-sister, friend of yore,
  Shall I no more hear thy "Good night?"
Blithe as when at my chamber door,
  A child I saw thy features bright.

Is it all o'er? Shall I ne'er feel
  Again thy soft hand on me laid,
As when of old, with mild appeal,
  Clear to my heart some fault was made.

The favour of thy tender love
  Most generously to me was given
In those old days—now from above
  I feel again its thrill from heaven.

For separate through long years, thy heart
  Was loyal still through all to me,
And sure I feel, where'er thou art,
  That what thou wer't thou still must be.

But flesh is weak, and craveth sight,
  And still I ask, "Will no day bring
To me again thine eyes' soft light,
  Or show me of thee anything?"

Dear, pleasant tokens used to come
  At intervals from thee to me;
And will all future years be dumb,
  Though million-tongued, of word of thee?

Unlike, and yet alike, thy love
  Found in the difference stronger root,
Lifting itself my worth above:
  And will that love no more bear fruit?

Stars reappear, and suns return,
  And earth's drear winter has its spring,
And will the life bound in thy urn,
  On earth have no requickening?

Love fills our hearts with blessed dreams,
  Giving our dear ones endless breath;
And now to me it sadder seems
  That these are all despoiled by death.

And one more dear familiar face,
  From the old home, once filled so bright
With happy hearts, has lost its place,
  Quickening no more the common light.

No more she'll tread the garden walks,
  Nor grace again the firelight's glow,
Nor by her listening while one talks,
  Make speech more sweet, as long ago.

Nor will her song that rang so clear,
  In those old days from room to room;
Beguiling time with lively cheer,
  For us again disperse life's gloom.

She's laid her earthly vestments by,
  And gone to a more tranquil home—
Her Father's mansion in the sky,
  Where gloom nor sorrow never come.

And there, all purified and blest,
  Her love that was so true and pure,
Shall reach us still, and still give rest
  To those it comforted before.

"LET IN MORE LIGHT."

(Last words of Goethe.)

[Calm, like a god, the old man sat, and with a smile seemed to bid farewell to the light of day, on which he had gazed for more than eighty years. Books were before him, and the pen which had dropped, as it were, from his dying fingers. "*Open the shutters, and let in more light!*" were the last words that came from those lips. Slowly stretching forth his hand, he seemed to write in the air; and as it sank down again and was motionless, the spirit of the old man departed.—*Longfellow's "Hyperion."*]

"Open the shutters!" oh, let in
  The spirit-blessing light!
Even yet dim shapes are walking within,
Dark-faced, distorted shapes of sin—
  Frightful things of night.

Pale shades of superstition I see,
  Muttering their legends trite;—
Decrepit and blind they appear to me,
As they weave their webs of mystery,
  To evade the beautiful "light."

Fear, far back in the darkness, cowers,
  Her purpose I shrink to write—
She whispers distrust of the spirit's powers,
That not for the soul come the beautiful hours—
  Not for man the blessed light.

Prating Prejudice, too, I hear,
  Contending with all her might
For the creeds and formulas of a year
Long passed—unmindful that *God is here*,
  She spurns the spirit-light.

Let in the light! its powerful ray
  Shall destroy, annihilate, quite
These forms of night which have long held sway:
They are trembling now at the footsteps of day—
  They shall die in the presence of "light."

Voices I hear from the inner rooms,
  Deep-toned as the voice of a sprite;
As living voices from lonely tombs,
Tone and meaning they gather from glooms—
  Their burden—"let in the light."

'Tis Ignorance, weeping Ignorance,
  Asking her spirit-right—
She has 'woke at length from the death-like trance
Of ages; and lifts her lurid glance
  Through the glooms, for "light, more light."

Doubt has seen through the spirit-chinks,
  A dim, uncertain sight;
Heard the dark riddle of the life-sphynx,
And from her heart as she ponders—thinks,
  A prayer is rising for "light."

Beauty and Truth, with bending mien,
  Religion, robed in white,
Are speaking—oh, hear their accents serene;
Darkness has shaded their beautiful sheen,
  They lament, and ask for "light."

Meek Mercy is pleading in beautiful tones;
  Aye, from every realm of Right—
Through the vast extent of being's zones,
To be revealed, in spirit-groans,
  Is heard—"let in the light."

From the deeps of a wide humanity,
  From a glorified destiny's height,
The poet uttered the spirit-cry
Of a world, and its necessity—
  Light! "let in more light!"

THE LAST WORDS OF ADMIRAL CARTER IN THE BATTLE OF LA HOGUE.

[Carter was the first who broke the French line. He was struck by a splinter of one of his own yard-arms, and fell dying on the deck. He would not be carried below. He would not let go his sword. "Fight the ship," were his last words, "Fight the ship as long as she can swim."—*Macaulay's History.*]

"Fight the ship!"—the rush and roar
Of gun and cannon and reeking gore,
And voices that "on" cry evermore,
Will be the best bandages for my sore;
The sight of courage will life restore.
"Fight the ship while she can swim."

"Fight the ship!"—I shall well lie
And easy, as long as I hear you cry
Words of hope and victory,
Stand firm and let the red balls fly;
Brave deeds are the best helps to die.
"Fight the ship while she can swim."

"Fight the ship!"—who fights not falls;
Luck serves him best who best serves his balls;
Victory comes where courage calls;
Bravery compels all walls;
Danger only weak hearts appals.
"Fight the ship while she can swim."

"Fight the ship!"—the strongest foe
Is that which whispers your courage low;
The breach will be equal to the blow;
To the strength of the wind the waves aye flow
Be strong—let every dark fear go.
"Fight the ship while she can swim."

"Fight the ship!"—Carter, thy word
Came from a soul that had never slurr'd
Its duty, nor ever with flesh conferred;
Hence by its power our hearts are stirr'd;
Hence through long centuries is heard—
"Fight the ship while she can swim."

Oh, weary hearts, 'neath life's hot fire,
Beginning to faint and fail and tire,
Still "fight the ship." No ill so dire
But it will yield; the righteous desire
With every struggle must be nigher.
"Fight the ship while she can swim!"

MARY AND ME.

IN THE OXONIAN DIALECT.

Be you gwaning up the road, Mary?
  Be you gwaning up to-night?
The world's like the church 'foore the prayers begin,
  Wi' the moon for an altar light.

If you be a-gwaning, I'll goo too,
  For my heart is fill'd wi' care;
But say you're gwaning, und that 'll do,
  And we'll talk our talk out there.

Well, since you're gwaning, I'm once moore blest;
  But, Mary, there's summat wrong,
For your eye's lost balance, and will not rest,
  And th' tune's gone out o' your tongue.

But it can't be true what they say, Mary,
  It can't be true what I've heeard,
That you've gone and forgot your word, Mary,
  And lissened that fool wi' a beard.

"He loves you better nur I do," you say;
O, God, that a lie should be sin!
For the lips that spoke it are dear to me,
As dear as they ever ha' bin.

But Mary, *my* Mary, *mine—mine* to-night—
To-night if never no moore;
I'm far too uncomely fur one so bright,
And I've thought so offen befoore.

And if you love him moore nur me,—
Though you've bin the star o' my life,
And must be still,—I'll set you free,
And aloone feace the world's hard strife.

UNDER THE ELMS.

(OXONIAN DIALECT.)

Kiss me, me babby; kiss me, dear;
Kiss yer mammy as loves yer so;
Und under the elms—see daddy's thear,
A-commin' hum to his babby, you know.

John Dale cum up, and he churp'd like a bird,
Und he baa'd like a lam', to his babby white;
But it ud bin bud, und it scasely stirred,
Fur t'ud moorn'd abed wi' um all the night.

Und its han's wer hot und soft und wake,
  Und its eyes wer dim und sleepy und sad;
But he helt out his han's, und it smil'd when he spake,
  Und turn'd frum its mammy to goo t' its dad.

Und he sot an' helt it all the night,
  A-moornin' und sleepin' an his breast,
(Till it grow'd quite dusk,) a-singin' light,
  All th' pretty songs it know'd the best.

Und he told 'is wife all the news he know'd,
  T' meake hur believe he had n'feears,
Till hope an hur wan feace shimmer'd und glow'd;
  When the babby moorn'd, t' be dash'd wi' tears.

Und th' naubur ooman ud cum in i' th' night
  If the babby wer wuss, she said; but then,
It might be better; she'd sin a sight
  A babbies as bad, as got better agen.

Next morn John Dale went off t' the farm,
  But his heart lay cold within his breast,
Fur hee'd left the lam', as kep it warm,
  A' whum behind in hur d'ath cloas drest.

Und Betsy Dale sot white as a ghost,
  A-thinkin' aloone an hur red brick floor
Ov hur little wench,—hur idol amoost—
  Whus pretty curls shee ud coom never moor.

But the praicher said, shee remembur'd it now—
  The Methodis' praicher she heerd last wick—
That Christ put His hand on the babby's brow,
  When He raised the dead und cur'd the sick.

Und she thought John Dale und hur, at lest—
  Fur their little wench wus allus good—
Might hope their babby by Him ud be blest,
  When hur angil in heaven befoore Him stood.

. . . . .

The tall elms cracked in the autumn wind,
  A-blowin' und mooaning solemnly
That night; but Betsy Dale could find
  No sleep, fur hur dead babby's cry!

ONE OF MANY.

Our hearts are art and part of all
  We see around us, the whole measure
Of things we good and evil call,
  Lies in ourselves and what we treasure.

Poor Alfred Wightman was a boy
  As poor as ever had a mother,
Yet was his heart a fount of joy,
  The solace still of every other.

An ailing, weakly, wan-faced child,
  Misfortune on him troubles squandered,
Yet had his eye a beam as mild
  As e'er from night or day star wandered.

A village lad, upon his head
  Seven summer suns had flushed and faded;
His thoughts by all about him fed,
  But still like mountain meres unshaded.

His mother was a widow lone—
  Lone save her children and her duty—
A woman on whose brow were strewn
  Sad marks of care mid lines of beauty.

Hard was her lot—she wrought and wrought,
  The sole purveyor of the table,
Full half her hopes still brought to nought,
  Fruit of her fortunes mean unstable.

But Alfred's heart was full of hope,
  His thoughts flushed out like Scottish heather
Adown a barren mountain's slope,
  Bright through all seasons and all weather.

And all day long his speech would run,
  Unfailing in its accents tender,
Of summer and its golden sun,
  Of birds and brooks and nature's splendour.

He loved all things that lived and grew,
  His very being's life was beauty;
And from that life his heart still drew,
  As from a seed, the flower of duty.

'Twas easy for him to obey,
  As 'neath the sun the flower's up-springing;
Joy filled his heart, and in its ray
  His spirit still kept heavenward winging.

An angel was he, ere his time,
  Thought his poor mother sad and lowly,
The while she pondered the sweet rhyme,
  In which he talked, to her most holy.

An angel was he, too, I ween,
  One of the choirs of heaven immortal;
Still something on him of the sheen
  With which he left God's holy portal.

Such angels are there many here,
  In all our homes both high and lowly;
Sweet angels on whose foreheads clear
  Still beams the seal of heaven holy.

They keep the poor man's heart still blest,
  Uplifted still through toil and sorrow,
They hold the rich man's to that rest
  Which is not, but shall be to-morrow.

BY THE FIRESIDE.

Sitting once more by the fireside
  Of the old paternal home,
As I often sit in memory
  Pleasant phantoms go and come.

Hoary winter has descended,
  Laid his white hand on the pane,
Flung his mantle on the orchard,
  Darkened all the earth again.

And I sit there in my dreaming—
  In the firelight's gleaming light—
With the dear ones who in childhood
  Made the winter darkness bright.

There are all the dear old faces,
  All the forms both young and eld,
In their old accustom'd places,
  As I them of old beheld.

Nor are looks of kindness wanting,
  For I lean upon a chair,
From which eyes to mine responding
  Ease my heart of all its care.

And a smile of love, long darkened
  From my life, as in the past,
With a dear uplifting sweetness
  Is once more upon me cast.

Words, too, follow, kind and tender,
  Words I've often heard before,
But familiar still they render
  The same blessing evermore.

For they bring back scenes of gladness,
  Scenes of quiet household life;
Which remembered, soothe in sadness,
  And make strong again in strife.

And though death has come between us,
  Breaking bonds that were so blest,
In those scenes of love forever,
  I find hope and joy and rest.

SPRING PICTURES:
LENGTHENING DAYS.

I hear the sound of the children
  Out in the street at play,
With hoop and ball and skipping-rope,
  In the light of the lengthening day.

The rooks fly homeward above them,
  To their nests in the tall elm trees,
At whose roots the snowdrops brighten
  In the February breeze.

The smoke from the cottage chimney
  Mounts slow the chill grey air,
Touching the heart with fancies
  Of a happy household there.

Far down in the west the river
  Glows like a face by the fire;
So does the cottage casement,
  And the vane on the old church spire.

The world rolls on with its changes,
  But still the children play,
The world's bright fair-haired youngsters,
  In the light of the lengthening day.

O blessed still is childhood,
  With its rosy care-free life,
Ere sorrow or pain or sadness
  Has darkened the world with strife.

We should all of us still be children—
  Should keep a child's heart still,
Gladdening the world in its sadness
  With the hopes our lives fulfil;

The hopes which strengthen and lighten,
  And make the sad world bright,
Which give to its feet new firmness,
  To its eyes diviner light.

ON HEARING THE CURFEW IN OXFORDSHIRE.

Slow sounds the curfew o'er the flowery meads,
  O'er rustic homestead and o'er cottage low;
Telling of feudal times and feudal deeds,
  Conquest and crime and battles long ago.

The Norman hand lies on the centuries yet,
  Dead in effect, in issue, and in end,
Like some old landmark overgrown and let,
  Devoid of use the memory to befriend.

Its sad and solemn sound heard from afar
  No longer fills the mother's heart with dread,
Sitting by her sick child with door ajar,
  Waiting with anxious heart its sire's late tread.

Nor does the traveller on the lonesome wild,
  Hungry and late and guideless in the dark,
Fear at its sound that from his mansion mild
  His eye will miss the warm and wished for spark.

Yet he who listens deep may hear to-day
  The Saxon curse upon the Norman wrong,
When living yet that hand on England lay,
  Crushed its strong heart and silenced its sharp tongue.

That curse made England strong: it ran with law—
  The law of God, which breaks the oppressor's spear,
And makes his armaments as stubble straw
  Before the wronged with hearts devoid of fear.

The Saxon heart, in England strong to-day—
  The stronger for that curse at conqueror's cost—
Beats with the Saxon carl long passed away,
  The fearless heroes of the mighty past.

Nor will time come—in future howe'er near
  Nor yet more distant, while man ruleth men—
When that strong heart, immovable by fear,
  Will not be found to curse the wrong again.

SHADOW AND LIGHT.

'Twas quaking cold, a north wind blew, crisp snow
  Like salt lay on the roofs, and in the shade
Along the pathways, and a lingering show
  Of the same substance casual lighting made.

A cold March day, the sky with clouds o'errun,
  Both large and dark, making the evening's close
Dreary; since noon had been no beam of sun,
  And now no star on the horizon rose.

Nature's most power o'er minds of her own mood;
  My mind was thicker clouded than the sky,
My heart more cold to faith in any good
  Than the white flakes which lay both far and nigh.

Complaining thoughts, whose utterance would have been
  A scourge in memory's hand for days to come,
Darkened my mind—that spiritual gangrene
  Whose false hues make man's better reason dumb.

How little wondrous, then, that Nature wrought
  Upon me, as I looked out on the night
Approaching fast, dark as a felon's thought,
  But darkness only—good's the source of light.

But there are powers than Nature's higher still—
  God never leaves us, in our darkest hours,
Even when most faithless in Him, through His will
  We feel the influence of diviner powers.

Just then I heard an organ in the street;
  With thought's swift inward eye at once could see
A youth—how cold with standing, hands and feet,
  With patient face, suing his tardy fee.

At the same moment, too, I looked around
  Upon the chimneys, smoking far and near,
And thought what o'erwrought mothers might be found,
  Toiling round some low fires, with scanty cheer.

What orphans check'd too oft, unplayful, sad,
  Shy, through excess of fear, might live and weep
'Neath some of those low roofs—what souls unglad,
  Sorely diseased, in some their beds might keep.

And where the smoke arose, with volume vast,
  A dense dark column 'gainst the silent sky,
A factory—what lives of men were passed
  In hardest labour, yet passed cheerfully.

Brought back to reason's voice—complainings still,
  I saw, the gloom's within that makes life sad;
O he best prays, best praises, does Heaven's will,
  Who lives (man ought) with heart devoutly glad.

A SKETCH OF LIFE.

The life of man is lower than his thought;
Man never quite attains the point he ought,
Nor is what he would be. The passions break,
In the high tide that earthly feelings make,
Far o'er the bound of right, and every day
He with regrets hath to retread his way.

To think is easy, but 'tis hard to keep
A steady ascent up the arduous steep
Of necessary action; and the eye
Upraised for ever to the holy sky
Of lofty purpose—earth's strong magnetism
Outbalances too oft the power of heaven.

Failure produces failure; having err'd,
Despair's dark depths are by the error stirr'd,
And send forth dreary thoughts that bind the eye,
And blot out every star in the fair sky
Of heavenly promise; and the better life,
Though long'd for, lies remote, for lack of strife.

Weak and low, despairing of the High,
Man yields to every show that courts the eye;
Stilling the good within him with the speech
Of an experience whose miseries teach
A justifying need; thus length by length
Evil gains o'er the soul its power and strength.

All things go wrong, whatever be the deed,
The hands' adventure nothing will succeed;
Success but right brings, and the galling sense
Of living under a base impotence,
Begets the wish within him that he were
Some other man or in some other sphere.

His world is dark—by purity comes light,
Gloom'd round on every hand by a dark night;
No path is visible, no star is seen,
He thinks on what he was—what might have been,
Of the blest sense of an exalting love
That raised him once all earthly ills above.

Sadness ensues; a peaceless heart and mind
Give all things the dark hues they seem to find:
Wrong yields no joy, he lives in pain, his thought
Bow'd to the fatal faults his folly wrought;
His sight tormented with the torturing gaze
Of a lost life, and drear unhonoured days.

Thus man lives on, yet without life, his life
Dispirited, discouraged without strife
Better to be or do, yet never dies;
The good within him, lost in sense, his eyes
Are heavenward still, waiting some time or chance
To bring him means to serve the soul's advance.

And there are times, in sin and misery,
When the deep tonings of eternity
Are clearly heard, and earthly things appear
All unsubstantial as a shining sphere
Of troubled water, and he treads the sand
Of the fair coasts of an abiding land.

But all things work their end, over the sky
No cloud lies always, man's born for the high;
Some sore disaster or some bitter blow
Of death lays every earthly comfort low:
Bereft of all on earth, again his eye,
Cheated with fading glory, seeks the sky.

Tremblingly now, not as in younger days,
Of self-assurance he the lofty ways
Of truth and goodness treads, a wiser thought,
Offspring of tears and darkness, hath him taught,—
And sorrow's teachings never fail of right,—
That he must lowly walk who gains the height.

Faith comes of right endeavour, having made
One upward step, despair's dark phantoms fade:
Courage renews the soul a steady strength,
Makes possible the dubious, till at length
High 'bove the flow of things which change the mind,
Power grows to purpose till 'tis unconfined.

Vow'd to great hopes, his heavy heart grows light,
All difficulties vanish 'neath the might
Of high devotion, and the blessed thought
Of being in strife to live the life he ought,
Exalts his moments to an upper air,
Calm, settled, peaceful, and unchanging fair.

Light comes to those who seek it; he now sees
Truth everywhere, in all things,—mysteries
Are but the views a higher ground reveals,
And from that point no mysteries—the seals
Of truth are earthly feelings purified
By heavenly purpose light than hopes more wide.

And who hath light hath might—the greatest deeds,
Are easy as the smallest; it but needs
The wisdom that conceives them. In the light
Himself, man on the feeblest, darkest sight,
Can produce perfect vision—deaf and dumb
When he who seeth speaks sound men become.

He blesseth most who is himself most blest,
As full of bliss as John on Jesus' breast,
The bliss which flows from the calm spheres of thought
And expectations holy hopes have wrought;
His realizations hope in others wakes,
And hope, whate'er man's lot, life blessed makes.

Now calmly flow his days; no earthly care
Darkens the azure of his life; a fair
And cloudless sky aye canopies the sight
Of him whose hope is high, whose life is right;
Vexatious thoughts and feelings drear unblest,
Births of earth bondage enter not his breast.

He knows no future time can bring him woes;
The future bears but what the present sows;
He hath sown righteousness, and the increase
Of righteousness is always joy and peace;
No anxious fears disturb him, come what may,
He hath a good to-morrow who makes good to-day.

Time changes, but the changing—the swift years
Tread down but earth grown things, but flood with
tears
Eyes fixed on earthly beauty; long ago
His eyes were loosed by loss from all below;
His thoughts by agony and anguish driven,
Shelter to seek in the calm ports of heaven.

Now when the failing sight and trembling knee,
And palsied hand speak of eternity—
The last lone bed, the coffin and the shroud,
Grave, yet not sad, with truth's rare might endow'd,
He yields his being, calming his last breath
With hopes that shine far o'er the gates of death.

THE STRANGER.

His stay was a brief and a swift one,
  And he scarcely said a word;
But he left me a wandering spirit,
  And a heart by a new life stirred;
And every day, at noontide—
  The hour when he first dropt in—
There's a flutter of footsteps and voices
  My aching heart within.

Yet he comes not; oh! he comes not!
  And my heart I chide and scold,
For letting the thoughts perplex it,
  Of a stranger grave and cold;
And I try to be gay and cheerful,
  And to keep a smile in my eye;
But my heart within is tearful,
  And I know the reason why.

Yet like a star unfading,
  Though clouds its light inurn,
Hope still my fears upbraiding,
  Above them all doth burn;
Hence smiles with sighs commingle,
  Like sunshine with the rain,
For I know this gentle stranger
  Must yet return again.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

The gossips stand in the sunshine,
  Below the garden gate;
Each one with some morning marvel,
  Or tale of the night to relate.

What is it they all are saying,
  As they talk with faces sad,
All blind to the summer glory
  Of a world so fair and glad?

Death has entered that lowly dwelling,
  Round which the roses climb:
And they are praising a tender maiden,
  Who is now beyond all time.

They remember her glowing beauty,
  And her smile like sunshine bright;
And they think of the grave that forever
  Will fold her in its dark night.

Nevermore will her mirth beguiling,
  Ease their heart of its hidden pain;
Nor her blithe "Good morn," at their doorways,
  Lighten their toils again.

And they tell how this morn she lieth,
  All calm, but devoid of breath,
Apart from the rest in her chamber,
  In the pure white robes of death.

Around her head are white lilies,
  In her hands are roses sweet,
And a wreath of rue and rosemary
  O'er the heart that no more will beat.

And to-morrow, they say, in the evening,
  When the shadows begin to fall,
They'll bear her away to the churchyard,
  To lie by the old church wall.

Six maidens meek, in white raiment,
  Will bear up the pall o'er her bier;
And the mourners behind, in their sorrow,
  Will follow with many a tear.

And they'll lay her away from the sunshine;
  And the flowers will bloom and fade,
And the spring return to renew them;
  But she'll still sleep on in the shade.

No morning dawn will awake her,
  No night bring her home to her bed;
But alone in her narrow mansion,
  She'll still sleep on with the dead.

Sleep on, while at home by the fireside,
  Her mother in anguish and pain,
Will dream that she hears through the twilight,
  Her song from the garden again.

And loosing the window to listen,
  Soft chiding her credulous heart,
Will pray that in God's holy heaven
  They may meet, sweetly meet, ne'er to part.

THE DEAD ROSE.

All its beauty now is fled,
Dead its leaves and witherèd,
Yet as sweet the scent exprest
As yesterday when on my breast,
Fresh from the garden and the air,
It lay the type of all things fair,
With a better grace than mine,
Breathing still a breath benign.

'Neath the farmer's eaves it grew,
Smiling with the morning new,
Throwing back beneath those eaves
A disc of cheerful crimson leaves,

Making, like a happy face,
A charm of gladness in the place;
In the shadow or the light,
Still a sweet refreshing sight.

Bright'ning in the morning air,
Farmers' lads beheld it fair,
And with bucket on her arm
The farmer's maiden blest its charm;
Yea himself the farmer grey,
Rising at the break of day,
Felt the world was right and fair,
When he saw it blooming there.

All day long to hearts it spoke,
Hearts of quiet country folk,
Travellers who, soon or late,
Passed the farmer's rustic gate,
Children on their errant way—
Loitering still—to school or play,
Nor the least, the beggar poor,
At the farmer's open door.

In my chamber now it lies
Coldly cast from all men's eyes,
Deemed no longer fit or fair,
For the bosom or the hair.

Yet in death it speaketh still,
Doth the room with fragrance fill,
Yet its pure sweet summer breath,
Sweet in life, is sweet in death.

When the winter cometh drear,
Sallow are the leaves and sere;
I shall in the moving shade,
By its parent branches made,
In the shadow and the gloom
Feel its fragrance, see its bloom,
In the darkening mists of care,
Helping me against despair.

And in sadness or distraught,
With a load of darkening thought,
I again shall often see,
In the light of memory,
A rose beneath the farmer's eaves,
With a disc of crimson leaves,
Showing me that life that's fair
Is still a blessing everywhere.

A SUMMER SCENE: OXFORDSHIRE.

O blessed summer morning sweet; again
  The sun with its old pictures fills the fields,
And the warm landscape after the bright rain
  A fresh and cheerful sense of pleasure yields.

The mower's out with music on his track,
  Quickening the earth with labour's gladdening
    voice;
The far off hills are bright, brave summer's back,
  And in its glory bird and bee rejoice.

The earth is glad in summer blessedness;
  Its vivid velvet lattermath of green,
Seen from afar, like queenly regal dress,
  In whose rare beauty spot nor stain is seen.

Happy to me beneath the great elm's shade,
  The clean white kine upon the pastures lie,
While from the tremulous foliage o'er them laid,
  The gentle wood pigeon coos mildly by.

And through the glowing air the bird-boy's shout,
  And clappers bold saluting the gay day,
Add to the charm that folds the world about,
  The glory blest that holds its airs in sway.

How glorious is the world, how full of good,
  When the sweet summer breathes along the lea,
Wakening her music sweet in merriest mood,
  The old sweet lays of summer ecstacy.

Come forth, O man, with care and woe opprest,
  In the sweet evening-time when toil is done;
Come forth with lifted heart, the world is blest,
  There are no sorrows dark where comes the sun.

There are no sorrows dark upon the hills,
  Nor in the shady woods where Nature free
The weary heart of man with rapture fills,
  With rapture blest, and summer melody.

TO MISS LYDIA SUTTON ON HER TENTH BIRTHDAY.

Ten years to-day a baby thou
  Lay calm amidst the storm
Of household hurry, hope and fear,
  Unknowing voice or form.

Ten years! what differences they make!
  Thou now canst read and write,
And sun and moon and stars give thee
  Intelligible light.

Now thou art full of conscious life,
  Thy heart hath store of glee,
And half the bliss of a whole life
  Lies in Thy memory.

Ten years of age is a sweet time,
  When neither hopes nor fears
E'er look beyond the present hour
  Into the unborn years.

When hoop and ball and skipping rope
  Circle a solar sphere
Of pleasure—making all they touch
  For a long lifetime dear.

And thou art ten years old to-day,
  Ten years of happy life
Thou'st known, free as a mountain flower,
  From earthly care and strife.

Not yet hath sorrow's solemn hand
  Been laid upon thy heart,
Nor knowest thou yet those darksome thoughts
  Which are of life a part.

And 'twere unmeet on such a day
  To speak of serious truth,
But joy comes in at every door
  In the glad time of youth.

Therefore, though I the charge may bear,
  And seem more rude than wise,
I would forewarn my love, that joy
  Comes not with each sunrise.

Has she not seen the skies all black,
  And heard the loud wind roar,
So life e'en the most tranquil hath
  Of dark days less or more.

And after the most shining day
  There comes a dark still night;
Lo! all life tends to one still spot,
  However blest and bright.

Oh then, my love, while life is fair,
  While yet there is no cloud,
Seek those blest joys which goodness gives,
  Joys which survive the shroud.

OPPORTUNITY.

Opportunities glide past us
  Like the moments, while we sleep,
Which unrecognised, uncounted,
  Still their golden circles keep.

There's not a pulse life numbers,
  Swift and many though they be,
But or man or wakes or slumbers
  Brings an opportunity.

Not a breath which being passeth,
  At whatever hour it may,
But the substance which it glasseth
  For some purpose wise makes way.

Everywhere like light they greet us,
  Thick as sands upon the shore;
Every hour like good they meet us,
  They are ours for evermore.

And as the free air of heaven
  Comes alike to every one,
They alike to all are given,
  Never-failing as the sun.

It but needs a spirit willing,
  Anxious what is good to do,
Anxious life's high ends fulfilling,
  To be pure, and wise, and true.

Ready hewn and fit for building
  Not long any stone will lie,
Without some occurrence yielding
  Chance in solid masonry.

The seed that's sown doth ever
  Find a time to swell and grow,
And the sea's full tide doth never
  Lack an hour to overflow.

'Tis the state of mind we cherish,
  The thought our life supplies,
Which allows fair hope to perish,
  Or brings opportunities.

Doubt and fear and needless sorrow
  Have no need our minds to gloom,
What comes not to-day, to-morrow
  Will on golden pinions come.

Come, as comes the light of morning,
  As the stars' soft silver light;
Come—God visits without warning,
  Crowning life with glory bright.

Ever cometh to the sower
  Harvest glad, and gay, and blest,
And, although the skies may lower,
  Summer brings its golden rest.

And to those who hope believing,
  Still toil on with upraised eye,
Shall come, with glad receiving,
  Fullest opportunity.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

A prince of men! he might have stood
With Norman Will or Lion Ric;
Within him flowed God's grandest blood,
A hero to the finger's quick.

Living in evil times, his mind,
Of all the minds of men alone,
Was clear as to what Heaven designed,
Of truth and justice should be shown.

His soul had vision higher far
Than soul of all his age had reached,
He saw truth's latest, brightest star,
And dared the doctrine that he preached.

His arm was strong, and firm, and sure,
Because his soul was just and true ;
Than all his peers he conquered more,
Because he fought with higher view.

He rose to power, and rank, and height,
As oaks by their own nature rise ;
The greatest man that saw the light
In those unhappy centuries.

'Tis true the world has tried to ban
His name and fame, with unjust speech,
But no vile hypocritic man
A nation vast could rule and teach.

No hypocrite could make his name
To kings and countries far and great
A terror, when the natural shame
Of evil deeds had lost its weight.

Hypocrisy, ambition, height,
Are not the powers which move the soul
Of him whose thoughts in highest light
Immortal glory find their goal.

His soul had felt the eternal powers,
Hell glowed sulphurous on his sight,
And God's eye flamed through all his hours
With terrible thought-piercing light.

How then could he serve earthly aim,
He justice feared and justice wrought,
All powers that were but powers in name
By him to speediest end were brought.

No silken sandalled ruler he,
His foot fell heavy on the land,
Crushing out all idolatry
Fiercely as by heaven's swift command.

He ruled with power; kept fools in awe,
Put all the land in wholesome fear,
And, if a tyrant, 'twas as law
Of God, most kind when most severe.

He had his faults; a microscope
Shows flaws and blots on whitest ground,
And on the sun's clear dazzling cope,
By aid of glass, black spots are found.

But we were ne'er designed to see
These faults diminutive, obscure,
Else scarce a form would comely be,
And hardly purest would be pure.

These rest with God; we'll these forget;
His cup was sorely dash'd with woe,
And, 'spite of faults, in history yet
No fairer name than his can show.

God's persecuted servants he
Was father to, wherever found ;
And well he kept our country
From foreign hands and foreign wound.

All honour to his injured name !
We'll twine the ivy round his brow,
And with this wish exalt his fame,—
Cromwell, thou shouldst be living now !

THE DEFORMED CHILD.

I knew a little boy whose form
  Distorted was, as if it grew
Like a dwarf'd tree, o'er which some storm
  Has swept, and curved the line once true.

A weakling still, he could not run,
  He had to stand, when fields were gay
With the bright harvest of the sun,
  And watch the other children play.

The birds above him soar'd, the bee
  And butterfly flew fickle past;
Its course the river flowed free,
  But he, his bonds were fast.

He could not run, he could not climb,
  Nor chase nor butterfly nor bee;
Nor follow, led by their soft chime,
  The ladybird and chafer free.

His tiny frame by time forgot—
  It seemed forgot, so slow it grew—
Was all unequal to the lot
  That nature gives to boyhood true.

When winter came, he could not mould
  The feathery snow, nor dare the slide;
Nor brave the sharp and tingling cold
  By the adventurous skater's side.

Nor could he wade the stream, nor pile
  The glowing leaves for bonfires bright;
Nor with the hoop his steps beguile,
  Nor follow the far-soaring kite.

He with his eyes alone could fill
  His heart that yearn'd for these delights;
His spirit in him thrilling still,
  At sight of boyhood's daring flights.

And hence he loved, with joy half fear,
  To stand the boyish crowd among,
And feel his heart, through eye and ear,
  In secret to their raptures strung.

And when they all were gone, he still
  Would linger longing on their track;
And all his face with smiles would fill
  If wayward wandering they came back.

What the bright sun is to the bird,
  What summer airs are to the bee,
They were to him—they in him stirred
  The life that set his spirit free.

And when the evening hour came round,
  And the day's tales were duly told,
He still some tale or story found
  Of what he'd seen of action bold.

And when he spake, he roused the ear,
  And pitying hearts his gladness blest,
Praising his words with blithesome cheer,
  And he was happy as the rest.

Nor vain his life: even churlish boys
  Grew gentle in his presence meek,
And oft would stop their clamorous noise,
  To him some kindly word to speak.

And often from the far off woods,
  The pale primrose for him they brought;
And told him in their kindlier moods,
  Of the sweet life that there was wrought.

And day by day his wordless love,
  With meek'ning force into them grew,
Until, at last, they too could prove
  That inner grace that makes life true.

OLD MEMORIES.

Old memories! old memories!
  Life's brightest part and best!
How many an hour that else were sad,
  Their whispers sweet make blest.
Dear souls, that made life sweet as wise,
  And voices, soft as chimes
That thrill the peace of Sabbath skies,
  Come back from bygone times!
And as no day, no hour, had fled,
  No bitter care had been,
Hearts with the absent or the dead
  Commune with joy serene.

Old memories! old memories!
  The heart is never sad,
But in its depths a glory lies
  Which still can make it glad.
There all the tenderness of life,
  Wrapt soft in mystic folds
Of unforgotten loveliness,
  Its power of blessing holds,
And, bright as suns and sweet as flowers,
  And pure as summer streams,
Its memories fill life's chequered hours
  With care-beguiling dreams.

Old memories! old memories!
  Our lives fly swift away,
And golden locks that stream'd in light,
  Flow sad in pallid grey;
But the dear faces childhood knew,
  The voices that youth blest,
The tender friendships, pure and true,
  Which gave life's long years rest,
Change not—they in the memory live
  The same through grief and pain,
And still the same sweet blessing give
  They gave of old—again.

LIVE WHILE YOU LIVE.

"Live only avails, not the having lived."—*Emerson.*

Live while you live! be no cowardly creeper,
  Submissively doing the will of dark fears;
No garrulous whiner—no imbecile weeper;
No indolent, ignorant, time-trusting sleeper.
Oh, live! life hath meanings yet higher and deeper:
  Live while you live! walk abreast with the years.

Live while you live! be no slave to the hours,
  O'ermastered and baffled by each passing ill;
Forest trees gather strength from the storms—and the flowers
Fresh fragrance and beauty, new life, from dark showers.
Oh, live! and these time-ills shall yield thee new powers;
  Oh, live! and the hours shall acknowledge thy will.

Live while you live! let no error or failing,
  No want or condition thy purposes sway;
Atonement can never be made by self-railing,
No want or obstruction removed by bewailing;
Regrets and remorse are alike unavailing,
  Live while you live! work while it is day.

Live while you live! the great of all nations
  Have lived—held their souls, amid sorrow and strife;
Hence their wisdom, transparent as heaven-revelations;
Hence their power 'mid the pressure of earth's dominations;
Hence their vast benefactions,—their grand exaltations:
  Oh, live! true success has its source in true life.

Live while you live! life, like a vibration,
  Travels on past the bounds of the eye and the ear,
Far on in the distance, where fails observation,
It wakes in despairing hearts high aspiration;
Gives strength to tried souls in the hour of temptation:
  Oh, live! life is power in every sphere.

Live while you live! the present is flying,
  And the tale of to-morrow hath yet to be told;
Do nobly the work that around thee is lying,
Speak the truths of thy soul without weakly complying,
Be brave, true, and earnest, all false faiths denying,
  Oh, live! wait the coming of no age of gold.

Live while you live! the great faiths which are ringing
Through lone souls, suggesting unwearying strife;
The visions prophetic Seer-Poets are singing,
The action-voiced prayers, which from hard hands are winging,
The hopes of the future the present is bringing,
Fulfilment can find alone in TRUE LIFE.

EVENING—AUTUMN.

The children with their satchels
Have just gone by from school,
And already the evening shadows
Are falling, calm and cool.

The firelight gleams from the windows;
There's a clatter in the street;
And the weary bands of labour
Speed home with hurrying feet.

Day and its toils are over,
Night trims her lamps afar,
In its eternal order
Setting each streaming star.

Now is the time thought wakens,
  And, on her pinions bright,
Leaving the earth beneath her,
  Pursues her upward flight.

What has this day accomplished?
  What has been done to-day?
Has prayer with deed been mingled,
  And love with both alway?

Has Duty's voice been hearkened,
  Or Pleasure's Syren strain?
Have deeds of good been compassed,
  Or follies wrought again?

Such are the solemn questions
  Which each departing day,
Our better souls awaking,
  Brings with its shadows grey.

It haunts us with the memory
  Of failures and of wrongs;
And night is filled with sorrows,
  That should have flown in songs.

Yet oh! thou troubled toiler,
  So oft perplext, deprest,
The seed now sown in sorrow
  Shall one day give thee rest.

For as a ship sails onward,
  With many a curve and bend,
Yet still by long persisting,
  Attains its destined end.

So thou upon life's ocean,
  At strife with evil still,
Shalt all thy heart desireth
  Of good, at length fulfil.

HARVEST TIME.

O, pleasant harvest time! To me
Thy fruitful fields are fair to see:
Bright fields of corn all ripe and red,
Where waves aloft each clustered head,
And far-off fields with verdure clad,
And bowery trees like spirits glad,
Rocking their shadows on the grass,
A pleasant sight to all who pass.

O, pleasant is the harvest time
To dwellers in this northern clime,
When the swarth reaper binds the sheaves
Beneath the thick umbrageous leaves;
And maids and men their labour cheer
With merry jokes when skies are clear;
And with loud shouts adown the lane
Hies home the laden harvest wain.

O, sad town-dweller, lacking light,
Go forth and catch of these a sight;
See where the early white mist lies
On all the hills beneath the skies;
Or at the pleasant close of day,
At evening take thy wandering way,
Up the white road, or down the lane,
And feel thy manhood's heart again.

. . . . .

And in the woods—up o'er the fields,
Whose ripe grain to the sickle yields—
Where shallow waters loitering play,
Among the rushes day by day;
And the gay sun—a stranger—peeps
And glitters through their leafy deeps,
The wanderer in the harvest-time
May often gather thoughts sublime.

Thoughts of the Bountiful, the Free,
Who giveth both to you and me,
And all the earth, with liberal hand,
The fruitful bounties of the land;
Whose Providence each rolling year,
By rains and dews and sunshine clear,
Still brings to toiling, trustful men,
The harvest of the year again.

LITTLE MAGGY.

Maggy's shy as any bird,
  O'er her lids her fringèd hair
Hangs, by fingers never stirred,
  Like a silken curtain there.

She has two bright eyes of brown
  Underneath that fringèd hair,
Peering ever up and down,
  Full of fun and laughter there.

One thing only Maggy knows,
  That is where the laughter lies,
Under faces whose grave shows
  Might beguile the keenest eyes.

Maggy is a merry child,
  Button'd lips of rosy red,
Loves to see the faces mild,
  When her smiles as words are read.

Low she sits upon her stool,
  Five year old, or thereabout,
'Mong the little girls at school
  Happiest of them all, no doubt.

Oft her hand steals into theirs,
  Looking up in happy mood,
Silent as a child that dares
  Break the rule of "being good."

Many a kiss sweet Maggy gets,
  Many a squeeze she knows not why;
She is one of nature's pets—
  Still the joy-beam's in her eye.

With her simple tender ways—
  She's no talker, Maggy, yet—
And her brown eyes' merry rays,
  She holds all as in a net.

Every day, or rain or shine,
  All calamities despite,
Joy is still sweet Maggy's sign—
  Happy still from morn till night.

Dimpled hands and rosy cheeks,
  Button'd boots that spin like tops,
Yet sometimes sweet Maggy seeks
  My lap, and on her elbows drops.

Thinks that life is a sweet game—
  Pondering looks she cannot bear;
Watches eyes for the sweet flame
  Of smiling kindness, everywhere.

Point her eye to aught that's bright,
  Tell her stories short and sweet,
Spell-bound, with her eye alight,
  She listens still at knee or feet.

Half an angel, half a witch,
  She reads all hearts as clear as light,
And often slights the grand and rich,
  And loves the lowliest looks, despite.

AUTUMN.

The air is soft, and calm, and clear
  The light like that which falls
O'er sculptured brows of saints austere,
  On old cathedral walls :

A silent meditative ray,
  Pale as a primrose rim,
Or a white violet 'neath the grey
  Of forest damp and dim.

The stubble fields, beneath the sun,
  Glisten like a lone sea
O'er which the faint gold gleamings run
  Of day's lost majesty.

The glory of the tall green trees—
  Their leaves of gladdening green—
Is changed ; Time's silent victories
  Yellow all mortal sheen.

Through the still air the dead leaves fall
  Silently, one by one,
Like high hopes hung on ends too small
  By change and chance undone.

The roads are wet with undried rains,
  The lanes lone, damp, and chill,
Denuded—not a flower remains—
  Yet reverentially still.

Still, save the robin's clear trill'd notes—
  Nature wants not her saints,
Through whose enrapt harmonious throats
  Heaven's worship never faints.

The long grass 'neath the hedge is white,
  White, too, the tall stiff stems
Left in the pastures—once their height
  Was crown'd with floral gems.

But flowers are brief lived. The blue-bell,
  Chalice of child's delight,
Forget-me-not, nun of the dell,
  The wild rose frail and bright,

Have bowed to fate. The banks are bare,
  And scent of foliage dead
Permeates the grey dreamy air,
  Their bloomy scents instead.

But change can ne'er touch nature's life—
  Nature is never poor,
Save to that heart where some low strife
  Shuts every heavenly door.

O wise of heart! O child of love!
  Thou of the gentle eye,
Come thou, with mind all guile above,
  Look on this Autumn sky;

'Tis fair! O everything is fair!
  Silence is melody;
Dead leaves as fair as flowers, where
  Men's thoughts with Heaven agree.

NOVEMBER.

The yellow leaves are falling,
  The air is grey and chill,
The brooks are loudly brawling,
  The fields are sadly still.

The days are short and shaded,
  The wind roars loud all night,
The fairest flowers are faded,
  The green is changed to white.

The birds have ceased their singing,
  There's rain instead of sun,
And the bright lives round us winging,
  Have perished every one.

All scenes have lost their glory,
  The world is bleak and bare,
The days with mist are hoary,
  Gloom broodeth everywhere.

Life, too, its changes knoweth,
  There's an Autumn in the heart,
Change comes —grief's chill wind bloweth—
  The bosom's birds depart.

The heart knows all the meaning
  Of things which grow—decay,
Of night—nights intervening,
  Of dear life passed away.

But time no season heedeth,
  It speeds through shade and sun,
And deepest shadow breedeth
  Where no blest work is done.

A WINTER WOODLAND.

There's glory everywhere—
  A charm in everything which God has made!
In every season there is something fair—
  The temple's glory or its solemn shade.

To-night the snow still lies
  Thick in the hollows, and the earth's fair green—
Dismantled by the softer mid-day skies—
  But on the ridges in faint lines is seen.

One circumstance of hue—
  White covers all things, far as eye can see;
Unites all differences within the view—
  The fields, the cottage roof, the road, the tree.

And over all this white—
  A white excelling all of hue most fair—
The still moon shineth like an altar light,
  Thrilling with glory all the breathless air.

And on the pure white ground—
  The marble basement of a sapphire dome,
Fretted with stars, with clouds of pearl embound—
  The trees in sweetest rest their shadows home.

Quietness reigns o'er all—
  A quiet calm and blessed, elevate,
With things from whom no shadows ever fall;
  The disembodied powers which glorious thoughts
    create.

Beauty, like ermined queen,
  With jewels glittering all around her head,
And on her face a sanctuary sheen,
  Doth over all a bracing splendour shed.

All round, from east to west,
  From west to east all round, all things are bright,
Above, below—and a calm placid rest
  Wraps all, as thoughts severe the hearts they light.

On such a night as this,
  The wheels of heavenly chariots oft are heard,
And echoes caught of that grand choral bliss
  With which the hearts of heaven's hosts are stirr'd.

On such a night as this,
  When every star is bright, and earth made white
In saintly raiment, and the moon's soft kiss
  Quickens the pale night hours to life and light—

The wave of human thought
  Hath a diviner, clearer, fairer flow,
And on its pearly margin heaven wrought
  Ladders descend, and angels come and go;

And all life's circumstance
  Of pain and darkness, sin and misery,
Fade out of being, as, with raptur'd glance,
  The soul pursues the train of Deity.

WHAT TO DO.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  From its evils cleanse thy life,
By submission, patience, purpose—
  Purpose high and holy strife;
Thou canst not write an epic,
  A new world mayst not find,
But thou canst make the life thou livest
  Pure and lofty, true and kind.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Up and purify thy soul—
'Tis its thick sloth-formed corrosions
  Which are cause of all thy dole.
Make it bright with thought and worship,
  Bright with reaping noble truth,
Bright with usage in that warfare
  Whose conquests need no ruth.

Do the thing that's lying next thee,
  Where thou standest, let men feel
There's a man in power beside them,
  Toiling at life's ceaseless wheel;
Let them feel life's strengthening bounties,
  Let them feel that life is great,
By its power in barren bosoms
  Wells of blessing to create.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let the hours of thy day,
Like the guests of kings and nobles,
  Precious tokens bear away—
Tokens of a heart unvanquished,
  Of a strong, unfainting soul,
Of a spirit still in combat
  With the waves that round it roll.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let thy duties, howe'er small,
Bear the stamp of faithful service,
  Hang like pictures on life's wall;
Let them, like the temple vestments,
  Be alike within, without,
Deeds of noble patience, serving
  To refute the general doubt.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let thy words be thought's pure gold,
Truth's superscription on them,
  Coins of the soul's true mould,—
So that each one, as it passes
  Through the circle where 'tis heard,
May refresh the hearts it reaches,
  Like the bounty of a lord.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let thy thoughts, the founts of life,
Bear no turbid trace within them,
  Nor be lashed by winds of strife;
But divine and noble ever,
  Let them, like the swelling sea,
In their depths bear all heaven's beauty,
  Tiding with eternity.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Be thy life's own master still;
Let no low, unworthy motive
  Gain dominion o'er thy will.
If't be pleasure, put it from thee,
  Or whatever thing it be;
Better life be sad than slavish—
  Noble spirits must be free.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let not the world's degree
Of excellence or knowledge
  Be a measure unto thee.
Life that's worthy, never follows;
  If it do, 'tis but the high—
Let the shadow of the noblest souls
  Still in thy vision lie.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Be a friend where'er you can,
And let those thou ownest find thee
  A genial, helpful man.
Life's not long, but on its borders,
  As it travels to God's sea,
Thou mayst plant sweet myrrhs and roses,
  Things that bless continually.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let thy deepest thoughts be given
To the voice that cries within thee
  Of the things of God and heaven;
Weigh it well, and well obey it;
  No life's great but what is pure,
Nor glad, but flows from goodness—
  Then 'tis blest for evermore.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Never rest in any sin;
If the thread of right be broken,
  Another yet begin,
And another, and another,
  Till thou reach those golden steeps
Where the sun of life ne'er darkens,
  The spirit never weeps.

Do the thing that's lying next thee;
  Let each morrow find thee higher,
Less a man and more a spirit,
  Unto nameless Being nigher—
Higher in all thought and purpose,
  Higher in all noble deeds,
Till thy life, a living glory,
  Crowns the height of human needs.

DO THY WORK.

"Fait ton fait."—*Carlyle.*

Do thy work. Know nought but duty;
  Heed not what the skies may be;
Duty makes eternal beauty,
  Hath its own sweet harmony.
What life brings of joy or sorrow
  Swiftly passes, cannot stay;
Do thy work; the coming morrow
  Never may be thy to-day.

Do thy work. No teaching hearken
  Which hath end in other rule,—
Bright at first, 'twill surely darken,
  Work's the word in wisdom's school.
Work's the word of all great spirits;
  Work's the word all great lives say;
Work, and thou shalt life inherit;
  Work, and grief shall pass away.

Do thy work. The day's sweet splendour,
  Night's fair stars so bright and true,
All with voices soft and tender,
  Unto work man's spirit woo,

From things trivial, vain, and dark'ning,
  Up to lofty labours call;
Happy he who gives them hearkening!
  On his head shall blessing fall.

Do thy work. The hours are hastening;
  Let thy spirit with them flow;
Up and work, their shadows chastening
  With thy life's pure radiant glow.
With pure thoughts and with pure feelings,
  Trace their fading outlines o'er;
Holy deeds whose pure revealings
  Life shall bless for evermore.

Do thy work. The world's heart fainteth
  For some guidance, what to do;
Every noble worker sainteth
  With a fervour pure and true.
Work's its need; in work time brightens;
  Hearts grow strong beneath its sway;
Life's deep heavy loads it lightens,—
  Through its darkness shows a way.

Do thy work. Rest not in knowing;
  Knowledge dies by work unfed;
Work's the moral ploughing, sowing,
  Which makes knowledge living bread.

All its charms and all its graces
  Root in what it helps to do:
Knowledge cheers not, never braces,
  Till it waits on labour true.

Do thy work. Life's end and blessing
  Lies in labour pure and high;
Labour is the true progressing
  Which upbuilds life silently.
Work uplifts, inspires.—Life blendeth
  With the forces of the sky;
Wraps the heart in thought which sendeth
  Powers divine through destiny.

Do thy work. Be brave, true-hearted,
  Let not life be all a dream;
On time's sea no soul is started
  Just to follow pleasure's beam.
Work's life's due, the due of being;
  And though snows may round us lie—
Storms rage o'er us—yet, sloth fleeing,
  We no hour must work deny.

Do thy work. Be firm, unshrinking,
  Resolute 'gainst every ill;
Never listening doubtful thinking,
  Never losing faith in will.

Firm at last, true work prevaileth;
  What was doubtful standeth sure;
Comfort comes;—the strong heart waileth
  Its incompetence no more.

Do thy work. This voice, high pealing,
  Sounds through all life's griefs and woes,—
All time's changes,—each revealing
  In this chorus hath its close.
Work's life's highest need and merit,
  Work's life's firmest staff and stay;
Work brings o'er the darkened spirit,
  Light that fades not with the day.

Do thy work. The vast forever
  Tiding round us like a sea,
Cries for action—pausing never
  In its solemn urgency.
Work! it cries; Work! ere day fadeth;
  Work! while yet the sun shines free;
Ere life's mist thy spirit shadeth,
  Ere the hours of darkness be.

TO THE REV. W. J. T.

I heard thy sermon, dearest friend,
  And thank'd God as I heard,
For through it all, from end to end,
  My heart to good was stirred.

The day was fair, the bright sun warm,
  The whole broad earth seemed blest;
And on thy words the day's sweet charm,
  And Nature's, seemed to rest.

For still they flowed with vital power,
  To vital power allied,
Like the sweet sun, through the sweet hour
  Diffusing blessing wide.

The old heroic doctrines preached
  Far up dim time's long flight,
Once more the hearts of mortals reached,
  And to those hearts brought light.

We heard the music grand—sublime,
  Of voices from afar,
And in our hearts the holy chime
  Rang out strife's stormy star.

Oh, autumn day! oh, sweet warm sun!
  Bright on the forests sleep,
And twinkling where the clear waves run,
  Like yours, our peace was deep.

The sapphire sky, still summer clear,
  That lay o'er earth that morn,
Was not more calm than the hushed sphere
  From which our thoughts were born.

The spell of earth for one brief hour
  By heaven's pure power was rent,
And life flowed free, with gracious dower
  Of love and sweet content.

MY FATHER'S EPITAPH.

O God, most wise and holy,
  Who scornest no man's prayer,
As pure and good and lowly,
  As full of all things fair,
Make us as him we sorrow,
  That at heaven's golden door,
On some sweet peaceful morrow,
  We may meet to part no more.

THE APPLE GATHERING.

Sweet pictures pass before my mind
  When autumn leaves begin to fall;
Pictures that pass and nearly blind
  My eyes with scenes which they recall:

The apple gathering of the year,
  At the old homestead far away,
When in the autumn sunshine clear,
  All hands were busy, all hearts gay.

The up-heaped baskets carried meet,
  With many a laugh at slips and falls,
By two stout youngsters, whose light feet
  Were ready still for old folks' calls.

At night the orchard's sorry plight,
  When all its fruit had disappeared,
The gathered treasures, ample sight,
  Which all the happy household cheered.

The little baskets of the best
  Next morning sent to friends or kin;
The careful stowage of the rest
  The old dim attic rooms within.

Oh, happy days of childhood bright,
  When every season, every scene—
Earth's sorrows and its cares despite—
  Was crown'd with varied pleasure keen.

When simple joys, the joys of home,
  The joys of home, its simple ways,
The pleasures which were sure to come
  In that sweet circle, blessed our days.

When life was fair as April morns,
  And pure as May's sweet crystal dew;
When life's bright roses had no thorns,
  And hearts were loving, trustful, true.

FALLEN LEAVES.

Leaves are falling all around,
Withered hosts upon the ground,
Slowly dropping, one and all,
'Mid a calm funereal.
Chilly morns, by sun unblest,
Nurse the shadows where they rest,
And the day relentless, drear,
Moaneth like a spirit there.

Where the winds perpetual sigh,
All along the paths they lie,
And beneath the garden wall,
Where the flowers are faded all;
Rudely covering the decay
Of many a flow'ret glad and gay,
Giving desolation room
To fulfil her heavy doom.

Where the blear-eyed morning fills
With silvery mists the viewless hills,
Ever shifting, damp and dank,
They lie upon the roadside bank.

The yet-green bramble, reft, forlorn,
Which shields the melancholy thorn
On its unresenting head,
Bearing tokens of the dead.

Cold and bare the landscape now,
Leaves are stripped from every bough—
Trees that crowned the road with shade,
By untimely frosts betrayed,—
All that verdure now is gone,
All the life of summer done,
Ruined all her choirs complete,
Late with harmony replete.

Sad and mournful now the earth,
Morn no more gives music birth,
Nought but hollow rattling rills
Wakes the silence of the hills;
And where joy and mirth were loud,
In the days of summer proud,
Harsh winds pipe at close of day,
A weird and ghostly roundelay.

Death is silent, death is sad,
All the days of beauty glad
Now are o'er; and darksome night
Drops her curtain o'er the light;

Evening gathers up at noon,
Morns are lighted by the moon,
And the cheerless day unblest,
Twixt two shadows dark is prest.

Leaves still have their time to fall,
Times when silence reigns o'er all,
Times when pale day's cheering spark,
And wild winds howl, and skies are dark;
But forever comes the spring,
And earth hath her blossoming,
And the heart that sighs to-day
Shall brighten in to-morrow's ray.

THE ROBIN'S SONG IN SEPTEMBER.

What would'st thou teach me, Robin,
With thy song so sweet and clear,
Piped aloud from the garden wall,
Aloud for all to hear;
Piped aloud from each bush and spray
The whole September day,
As if thou wert glad of the fading beam
And the tender shadowy ray?

It rains, and the earth is dreary,
  Yet I hear the sweet song still,
Cheerily, still cheerily,
  Through the mists and the moisture chill;
It seems to swell with gladness
  Despite of the falling year,
Despite of the rain and the sadness
  And the mists of autumn drear.

Sing on! sing on! O Robin;
  Sing on! to the heart of the poor
Thou sing'st of hope and gladness,
  And they need them more and more;
Their homes, oft sad and dreary
  With trouble, toil, and care,
They need thy sweet song cheery,
  To save them from despair.

Sing on to me, O Robin,
  Sing on, and teach my heart
How in life's mist and its darkness
  I may bear a cheerful part;
How when life's sun declineth,
  And its fading leaf grows sere,
I may meet the shadows with gladness,
  Like thee—of life's falling year.

STAND AND STRIVE.

Stand and strive, all sadness scorning;
  Up and gird thee to the fight;
Put on hope, that gleams like morning,—
  Hope that lightens in the night.
Put on purpose, strength imparting—
  Purpose, that makes one man ten—
Purpose, whose sure spear, far-darting,
  Never bootless comes again.

Up! put off all thoughts that darken;
  Life's a flower that needs the light;
Life's for duty—not to hearken
  Fancied phantoms of the night.
Give thy heart a firm reproving
  When it talks of fears and tears;
Thou must onward, upward moving,
  All life's conflict cheers and clears.

What! thy griefs are more than others,
  Darker, deeper, greater far?
'Tis not true, my weary brothers—
  Yet—up, face them, if they are.

Be determined, be unshrinking;
  Think that life hath heights that rise
Upwards—far beyond thy thinking—
  Heights on which God's sun still lies.

Strive! strive still through all life's changes,
  Let thy *must* o'er all prevail;
Ill's no power where life advances,
  Strivers never lose nor fail.
Sad to-day, they sing to-morrow,
  Out of darkness bringing light;
Victors sure, to whom each sorrow
  Still surrenders in the fight.

Stand and strive! strive harder, longer,
  With a firmer, truer mind;
Strive till thy weak heart grows stronger,
  More believing, more resigned:
Until thought grows broader, brighter,
  Shines a constant light within;
Until every task grows lighter,
  Until vanquished every sin.

Strive! oh strive! thy deed and blessing,
  Lowly though thou art and lone—
Hearts of thy compeers possessing—
  Like a seed of gladness sown,

May become, in time's careerings,
  Shelters blest, where tempted souls
Strength may find 'gainst life's frail veerings,
  Strength to win hope's holiest goals.

Strive! O strive! thou helpest, holding
  To the right all things divine;
Art a power, whose vast unfolding
  Parallels an endless line.
Generations, far on sweeping,
  Worlds to be, of name unknown,
Through thy firmness, gladness reaping,
  Life of loftier line shall own.

WHITE ROSES.

Gaudy hues and colours fair,
Give to those who for them care;
Give me roses saintly white—
Summer's best and sweetest sight.
Cool and beautiful they grow,
'Neath the farmer's thatched roof low,
Spreading out their silvery sheen
From a bower of summer green.

Still they come with summer sweet,
With the long day's glowing heat,
With the songs of maids and men,
From the hayfield blythe again;
With tins of foaming milk so white,
And the shepherd's dear delight,
Flocks of lambs with shaggy hides,
Sporting on the bright hill sides.

Like an olden poet's rhyme,
Full of the sweet summer time,
All the joy and all the mirth
Of the ever-changeful earth.
They bring back their snowy grace,
Sanctifying all the place;
And filling all the garden there
With a happy Sabbath air.

Village maidens don them sweet,
When their loves they go to meet.
Treading deeply-shaded ways
On the blessed Sabbath days,
All their joys and all their love
Woven with them, sense above,
Into the sweet hopes that start
All unbidden in the heart.

Where these sweet white roses grow
When they show their blooms of snow,
Let me live the gladsome hours,
Gladder made by breath of flowers;
While afar in the blue sky,
Fair white clouds go sailing by,
And all the heart and all the ear
Are gladdened with sweet summer cheer.

TO A POLYANTHUS LATE IN NOVEMBER.

Brave bearer of the pelting hail
  And biting blast November brings,
Thy cheerful face tells me a tale
  Of brighter days and better things.

The skies are dark, the winds are high,
  No bird sings now upon the bough,
Yet thy sweet, patient, saintly eye
  With heavenly radiance shineth now.

Like some poor youth, who steadfast still,
  Though by misfortune direly driven,
Feeling his gifts, with earnest will
  And heart of hope, looks up to Heaven;

Thy tender flower upon the blast,
  Beneath the cruel wintry rain,
Like the sweet gifts which he holds fast,
  In this sad world is not in vain.

For some sad heart, devoid of light,
  Doubting Heaven's constant care and love,
Beholding thee in care's dark night,
  Perchance may learn to look above.

Perchance may learn with humbled mind,
  That in life's dark and wintry hours,
Words spoken by the wise and kind,
  Will bloom, and bless sad hearts like flowers.

THE NEW YEAR—1882.

Again the New Year's tide comes round,
  And friendly greetings fill the air,
And words of peace and cheer resound
  With kindly courtesy, everywhere.

A Happy Year! A Happy Year!
  Forgetful of all party strife,
Men kindly cry—fills every ear,
  And comforts hearts and strengthens life.

We also cry, A Happy Year!
  A Happy Year! with heart and voice;
May peace and hope come everywhere,
  And every heart of earth rejoice!

O glad New Year, let thy sweet airs
  End social crime, heal social strife,
And bring the poor, amid their cares,
  The joys of hope, its happier life.

Bring in the olden life and deed—
  Its charities uplifting, kind;
The simple faith, the broadening creed,
  Of love to God and all mankind.

Bring in the vision and the seer,
  Love's mystic passion and its meed;
The wisdom that makes duty clear,
  And prompts the high heroic deed.

Bring in, bring in, O! glad new year,
  The courage that makes men of men—
The stoic virtues, speech sincere,
  The faith of man in man again.

Bring in the nobler truths we wait,
  The Christ that is to be, reveal;
Bring in the thought that makes life great,
  The joy of nations and their weal.

Let Righteousness and Peace embrace
  And gladden all the land with good;
And blest abundance cheer the face
  Of Want and Woe, with plenteous food.

Let pure Religion, wed to Right,
  Speed o'er the land in robes of snow,
And every home of man make bright,
  And plenty everywhere bestow.

OUR DOG ROUGH.

Our little dog
  Is curly and white,
The pet of the household,
  Her master's delight.

For him she has ever
  A warm welcome cheer,
A glad bark of welcome
  When master is near.

She knows every foot
  That is friendly and fair,
But her sharp bark at strangers
  Bids them beware.

By night and by day,
  Safe and secure
She guardeth the house,
  And watcheth the door.

She knows a good deal—
  Every kind word and look—
In her old-fashioned way,
  As clear as a book.

Hurrah! then for Rough,
  She's the dog of the day,
And a mouthful for her,
  Happen whatever may.

A HYMN.

Be with me Lord, to-day,
  With me in toil and pain,
With me when glad and gay,
  All evil to restrain.

With me in trouble sad,
  When care's o'erwhelming tide
O'erflows life's prospect glad,
  All peaceful light denied.

Then, then I need a hand,
  A Father's hand of might,
To hold me to the strand
  Of hopeful, heavenly light.

Then, then I need Thy care,
  Above time's earthly night,
To save me from despair,
  My sinking soul despite.

Then, then I need Thy love,
  Those inner voices sweet,
To lift my heart above
  The ills around my feet.

O Father, lead me on,
  Nor let me ever stray,
Earth's peaceless paths upon,
  From Thy dear life away.

THE PRESENT.

All time is good, the hour which serves the need
  Of every one of us that lives to-day;
Has the same virtue to sustain wise life
  As those long passed away.

No time is dark, or dreary, or unfit:
  Its darkness is the shadow of our thought;
He who hath a pure heart and good desires,
  Finds every hour with heavenly incense fraught.

It needs a heart full of celestial good,
  A mind on purest purposes intent,
To know the passing hour's full magnitude,
  Its power's full complement.

As a poor fly wandering upon the pane—
  To common eyes an undelightful thing—
Shows through a glass of proper hue and mould,
  Purple and gold beneath its homely wing,

So the dull Present, seen through a true sense
  Of what it leads to, and what it demands,
Shows, 'neath its shadow, lengths and breadths before,
  Like fertile fields in undiscovered lands.

But even better and in truer light
  Is the full glory of the greatness seen
Of present moments, when death rends the veil
  Of earthliness our eyes and them between.

Then, worth a kingdom every second seems,
  All their unfitness passeth like a cloud,
No act too holy to be done in them,
  No aim too high for them—no hope too proud.

But gold is gold, and time than it more true
  To its own virtue, needs no proof of worth;
And this particular hour we live in, springs
  From the same source as those of Cæsar's birth.

He who hath jewels which have ne'er been cut,
  Knows not the beauty of their hidden beam;
So he who ne'er hath shaped his hours to ends
  Of lasting merit, thinks as those who dream.

Not till the mind puts off its pride of power,
  The heart accepts the suffering virtue needs;
Wisely preferring scorn, and loss, and toil,
  To present reputation shining deeds.

Can anything be known, the present least—
  The present serves man as he serveth it;
He who its cries for truth and goodness hears
  With wise obedience, finds each moment fit.

Only to those who have no wish or care
  Or mind to seek the good that in it lies,
The present moment dull and hopeless shows,
  And in appearance all its worth denies.

Good must be first believed in ere 'tis found;
  The sun gives its own hues to all the earth—
And from the mind's position and its light,
  All things of life and time derive their worth.

The smallest ray of thought inspired hope,
  Hope which hath only good beneath its wing,
Out of this present, with its dreariness,
  Divinest light and joy the heart would bring.

A wise determination, too, would break
  From off the present all its density,
For every need of good, or strife with ill
  Of thought or feeling, find sufficiency.

When these poor moments have become the past,
  And every chance of good in them is gone,
Then different thoughts than those that cloud them now,
  Will show what means of good were trampled on.

This present, which we think so lightly of,
  Over all youth and strength and life hath power;
'Twill leave the youth less youthful, weaken strength,
  Bring all that live nearer to their last hour.

And in their last lone place 'twill thousands lay
  Unmindful of the good they had in thought;
The good delayed, forever left undone,
  Lives without good, without good to end brought.

Nor will this hour die with the aimless thoughts,
  Which in it with vain visions feed the mind;
Restraining that pure sense which works in all
  From finding hopes by heaven for man designed.

Mean as it seems, this hour will hold its place
  Through all the future in the memory;
Its deeds will be our strength and hope, or else
  Our curse and sorrow through eternity.

SIMPLE FLOWERS.

I love the flowers that grow before
The cottage window, poor man's door:
The snowdrop, wallflower, the sweet-pea,
And sweetbriar, have charms for me;
They rise amid want, care, and strife,
Like hopes of an hereafter life.

I've look'd on many a label'd stem,
With flower like Oriental gem!
These I admire, but oh! far more
The flowers which cheer the lowly poor;
Those simple flowers which lighten care,
Silence the teachings of despair.

The flowers the cottage-maiden wears
On Sundays, mingling with her prayers
Her highest wish, her holiest thought,
Their breath-like incense fragrance fraught,
Seeming to her the while a part
Of the deep meaning of her heart.

The simple flowers which gladden earth,
Where times are hard, where joys are dearth,
Which lowly cottage festals grace,
Or lie around the coffin'd face
With sprigs of rosemary and thyme,
Softening even death's cold clime.

Dear to humanity these flowers,
The dazzling dreams of childish hours,
The hopes, the joys, the griefs of years
Have dropt on these like falling tears;
They blend with every better thought
Hope hath inspired, Religion taught,
Faith hath revealed, or God hath given,
As symbols of the joys of Heaven.

ON JOHN BRIGHT'S ELECTION.

Thank God! one step is won toward the right;
  One step that proves that England still has hearts
By treachery unconquered, who, in Bright:
  (A man well lettered in the holy arts
Of public benefit and upright thought;
The Aristides of an age o'erfraught
With insincerities, false, worldly sense:)
  Have found a spokesman worthy of their choice;
One whose humane, veracious eloquence,
  Has been for years as cry of conscience-voice
In Britain's senate. Many will rejoice
To-day, whom thoughts of unright influence
O'er minds unthoughtful, not long since made sad:
Hope brightens when success makes good men glad!

KEEP HEART.*

"All is dark; but Thou, Eternal Father, canst make the day dawn."—*Jean Paul Richter.*

Troubled of heart! souls of a darken'd hour!
  Sons of an honest toil,
Lacking the means which give the power
  Grim Hunger's pains to foil;
Doomed to a cheerless idleness,
  To learning the sad art
Of living low when need's no less—
  Look up! there's hope! keep heart!

Yours is a fight endorsed by heaven—
  For honest bread your strife,
From morn to night your powers are given
  To win the means of life.
And now, bereft of sword and shield,
  Of work—ill-killing dart,
Beleaguered in a sterile field,
  Fear not, hope on, keep heart!

* This was written when trade was very bad at Carlisle, in the winter of 1857.

Hold fast to the man your breasts within,
  To truth, to right, to love—
The soul that has conquered a thought of sin,
  Hath power o'er heaven above;
And unto that mind that in love delights,
  Woe loses half its smart;
Kind feelings kindle celestial lights
  In the bosom that bears them—keep heart!

Keep heart! ye belong to God's elect,
  To the suffering ones who cry—
"How long, O Lord! we Thy justice expect;
  Avenge us from Thy sky."
Your tears fall in no barren soil—
  With the suffering God takes part;
Trust Him; He can bless the cruise of oil
  That it faileth not—keep heart!

Keep heart! through sorrow is life made wise,
  The stars are unseen till night;
'Tis the rain that causeth the flowers to arise;
  Without sorrow, without light;
And wisdom and goodness are one, and he
  Who in good hath his part,
For good hath heaven's security,
  Good fails not the good—keep heart!

RELIGION.

Religion, what is it?—living for good,
Making good only the sole end and aim
Of life—its single purpose—understood,
Nor possible to be but through the flame
The light its presence kindles—light of love.
Love is the arc which, all beliefs above,
Spans all religion meaneth, all it holds.
Religion is the life of him whose heart
Both man and God in its pure love enfolds.
Religion's tender-hearted, bears the smart
Of suffering with the suffering, and bestows
More thought on others' than on its own woes.
It is the spirit, the diviner part,
The life incorporate text of all of heaven man knows.

TO THE RIVER EDEN.

River that 'neath bare fells flowest,
  Mountains wild, that bound the sky,
Washing castles as thou goest,
  Rich in ancient memory.

Many a year its curve hath rounded,
  Since I first thy wild course knew,
Where the sky all round is bounded
  With bleak fells of sombre hue,

Higher in thy native county,
  Where rough becks their red waves blend
With thy purer, clearer bounty,
  As they from steep rocks descend.

Then I, almost shuddering, greeted
  The cold prospect from thee seen;
Now, with love not to be meted,
  I behold the stern wild scene.

Hours I've known of peaceful pleasure,
  'Mid the scenes which bound thy course,
And their memory, a blest treasure,
  Lays o'er all its softening force.

Here I've met friends genial hearted,
  Here I've heard high converse flow;
Here have lived, from here departed,
  Souls my thoughts will ne'er let go.

Here kind hearts have kind deeds tendered,
  Added mine to their own cares,
And those words uplifting, rendered,
  Pure in their avail as prayers.

And when oft to lowness leaning,
  Here I've been made quick and strong,
By the fervid quickening meanings
  Of some soul of prophet tongue.

For this city which thou lavest
  With thy last and lowest waves,
Speech has heard of best and bravest
  Of the few which this age saves.

Thus through benefit joy flowing,
  Thy fair course by strangeness sealed—
Course most fair, with a true knowing—
  Hath more truly been revealed.

Now, not in bright summer only,
  When the mountains lose their snow,
Charm'st thou me—but in the lonely
  Winter, too, I love thy flow.

A TALE OF A GIANT.

Once on a time a giant lived—a man of mighty size;
So big was he, that everything looked little in his eyes;
Yet he possess'd a human heart, and could not be at rest,
Till he had done some mighty deed to make his spirit blest.

So up and down the world he walk'd, with eager-seeking eyes,
To find some mighty thing to do worthy his mighty size.
Long, long he wandered all about, the whole world up and down,
But nothing great enough could find for his great power's renown.

At last, o'ercome by his own grief, he sat down sore unblest,
Upon a noble river's brink, his mighty limbs to rest;
And as he sat, in musing mood, following a drear day-dream,
A little child that pass'd that way, fell headlong in the stream.

Then up he rose—his heart was touched—plunged
in and drew it out,
And bore it to its mother, who received it with a shout
Of joy hysterical—with tears, that like soft April rain,
Were all sunn'd o'er with smiles, that she could
clasp her child again.

And o'er and o'er she thank'd and bless'd the saviour
of her child;
She thank'd and bless'd him o'er and o'er with
gladness almost wild;
Until he felt as till that time he ne'er before had
felt;—
And, strange, his power grew stronger as his heart
began to melt.

That hour within his mighty heart a wisdom new
was born:
He saw that little, mean, and low, were titles born
of scorn;
He greater felt than e'er before through all his giant
years,
The moment that he saved that child, and won
those grateful tears.

And from that time his heart within, like music
heavenly sweet,
He heard that mother o'er and o'er those blessed
thanks repeat,

Until o'er all his mighty soul such blessed spell was wrought,
That he a different man became, in hope, desire, and thought.

And now he all the past abjured, and sought great deeds no more;
The bliss of doing well had made him wiser than before.
He rose, went forth, and did with zeal whate'er to do he found,
And so at last he came to be of all men most renown'd.

O friend, who readest this brief tale, hast thou this giant been?
Waiting for deeds all blazon'd o'er with fame's deceitful sheen,
And with a proud indifferent heart, through long years, passing by
As low and mean, the blessed deeds of holy charity.

If so, arise! Time flies, life wanes, the world hath painful need;
No longer wait; put forth thy power, and work at some fair deed;
And in thy sorrowful great heart shall spring a new bright sense
Of purest joy, and thou shalt feel God's own omnipotence.

LIFE SIMILES.

Life is a fortress, before it stands
An army vast of hostile bands,
  It stands there night and day.
And he who ceaseth watch to keep,
Trusting his fate to sloth or sleep,
His towers proud and turrets steep,
  That foe in dust will lay.

Life is a church—the preacher there
Speaks loudly from his holy chair;
  Speaks loudly night and day.
And he who hears, and hearing spurns
That word which spoken still returns,
When fading low his day-star burns,
  Must weep, both weep and pray.

Life is a garden—therein grows
Whatever man, the owner, sows
  And beareth fruit alway.
What sowest thou there, the aconite?
Or roses fair and lilies white,
To make the world more pure and bright?
  Thy seed-time is to-day.

Life's a sky—a sky all grey—
A sky illusions hold in sway,
  And make its day and night;
But hearts of truth, uplifted, pure,
Find in it lights of ray more sure,
Rare heavenly glories which endure
  Imperishably bright.

BE CHEERFUL.

Be cheerful! still cheerful, through all things—
  Through cloud, and through storm, and through rain,—
For each in pure bounty some good brings,
  Some blessing, though mingled with pain:
The glad and the sad flow together,
  We cannot have sunshine alway;
But sunshine still follows foul weather,
  And still after night cometh day,
And each in its time and its season,
  Alike both the dark and the bright,
Have in their pure uses a reason,
  That always proves kindly and right.

Be cheerful! still cheerful, through all things,
  'Tis braver to fight than to yield,
To live with a courage that hope brings,
  Than to beat a retreat from the field;
And beleaguered to-day and defeated,
  We to-morrow may win and be free,
Our hopes in their fulness completed,
  The hopes we had fainted to see;
For the courage and trust that we cherish,
  And the deeds pure and true that we do,
Are things that can never quite perish,
  But must still bring the blessing that's due.

Be cheerful! still cheerful, through all things,
  Our doubts and our fears are oft vain,
For the clouds pass away, and the sun brings
  Its light o'er the shadows again;
Leave evils unknown till to-morrow,
  The morrow that fear makes so sad,
For labour is hindered by sorrow,
  And workers, true workers, are glad;
And we owe it a due to each other,
  Alike both to friend and to foe,
To show the bright face of a brother,
  However life's fortunes may flow.

TALENTS.

Talents have all, though oft wasted and squandered,
Left like the gold by the pagan, unpondered,
Which hides in the earth over which he has wandered,
  Waiting the will which shall bring it to day:
None are so poor, so forsaken, or lowly,
But in them some treasure abides of things holy,
Something divine, which, if cherished, might slowly
  Brighten to beauty and gladden their way.

Like the vast life in the seed that waits sowing,
Like the rare pearl 'neath the ocean wave's flowing,
Like the far star whose pure light in its glowing
  Still sleeps unseen in the bounds of the sky:
Lie in man's heart precious gifts for his blessing,
Gifts which might help him, a true heart possessing,
To lift up his life by a noble progressing
  To splendours of wisdom, to deeds that ne'er die.

Heart never beat but some glory lay in it;
Something which, had we the skill that could win it,
Would lighten and brighten and gladden each minute,
  Like the sweet music the silent chord holds:
Touched by pure truth this rare glory will waken,
Rousing a rapture like silver bells shaken.
Sin's troubled discord for evermore taken
  Out of the heart that its sweetness enfolds.

Bring forth these gifts which within thee are sleeping,
Use them for good, they but rust with the keeping,
Let thy pure spirit have sheaves for the reaping
  When the stern harvestman treads the ripe field ;
Brook no delay in this labour inspiring,
Mark how creation incessant, untiring,
Brings forth her treasures, each small thing aspiring
  Its utmost of beauty and blessing to yield.

Be, and not seem ; let thy spirit, far-reaching,
List the world's harmony clear and deep teaching,
Like it for ever in cheerfulness preaching
  Hope's holy gospel that hallows the heart.
Dream-like and fleeting time flieth, life endeth,
Let thine be faithful and pure such as blendeth
With the world's motion that ever ascendeth,
  With the eternities bearing thy part.

THE GOOD OF GLADNESS.

"Joy, lady, is the spirit and the power,
Which, wedding nature to us, gives in dower
A new heaven and new earth."

Coleridge.

Ope thy heart to all pure pleasures,—
Sunshine makes the spirit strong;
Life, when right, 's a cup that measures
Speech for speech and song for song.
Action hath a pulse which gladdens—
Flings a glory on the air;
Spirit only dims and saddens
When it yieldeth to despair.

Purest hearts are still the gladdest;
Childhood's eye is always bright;
Let no sorrow, e'en the saddest,
Darken all thy spirit's light;
Scorned, neglected, weak, and weary,—
Bear it bravely—keep thy smile;
Kindly thoughts bring spirits cheery,
Heal the wounds of life the while.

All our nature cries for gladness;
  Brightest souls bear noblest deeds.
Heroes—they have conquered sadness,
  Conquered that which sadness feeds;
And in us no flower of blessing,
  Nothing great or grand will grow,
Till we gladly, grief suppressing,
  Yield our hearts to joy's pure flow.

Health, and wealth, and life is gladness;
  Souls shut up in endless glooms
Pale and sicken; cherished sadness
  Fills the world with heavy dooms.
Gladness quickens, lightens, brightens,
  Gives the heart a firmer beat,
Life at its dull sources heightens,
  Makes its fountains clear and sweet.

Man was never made for sorrow;
  This brave world assumes life blest,
Each bright noon, each blushing morrow,
  Comes as to an angel guest.
And the soul which in man liveth—
  Seraph tongued and seraph eyed—
Source of all that blessing giveth,
  But with bliss is satisfied.

Let's be glad; despair's a liar;
  What have we to do with grief?
He who works should be no sigher;
  He of glad one's should be chief.
In his heart should bloom heaven's bowers,
  He should march with spirit strong,
Making life a round of hours
  Bright as heaven's—as free from wrong.

Let's be glad the world needs gladness;
  Life is blighted by despair,
And for crime no cure is sadness,
  Joy were better everywhere.
What we need is life that blesses,
  Thought that lifts souls up to heaven,
More free speech, more kind caresses,
  Pleasant deeds from morn to even.

THE ANGEL OF LIFE.

Clothed in white, all pure and spotless,
  In our souls an angel walks;
On her face heaven's light and beauty,
  And of heaven and God she talks.

All our lives long she stays with us,
  Like a loving sister there;
Sometimes uttering lofty counsel,
  Sometimes breathing heavenly prayer.

Sometimes o'er our follies weeping,
  When we sin and go astray;
Sometimes strengthening us to labour,
  Taking all our grief away.

Sometimes weak, and faint, and failing,
  By life's many ills opprest;
Sometimes conquering, strong, triumphant,—
  Victor wreathes upon her breast.

Sometimes visionless and lifeless—
  This is when sin rules the soul;
Sometimes rapt, and grand, and godlike,
  Swaying life with heaven's control.

Oh! our lives would all be nobler,
  Of a fashion more divine,
If this guest of God within us
  Had a sway of larger line.

If our lives, by sin untarnished,
  Like a crystal pure and clear,
Through each thought, and word, and purpose,
  Let this angel power appear.

If we lived as live young children,
  Where the angel always rules;
With our hearts like gentle pupils,
  In these holy inner schools.

If, like fields in summer's beauty,
  Blossomed o'er with golden flowers,
Still the angel glory blossomed
  On the plane of all our hours.

If, through all our nature's reachings,
  Like the sunshine and the air,
Still the angel breathed around us,
  Still the angel light were there.

If alive and strong for ever,
  Like a star that never dies,
From our mouths still spake the angel,
  From our eyes still looked its eyes.

WHAT TO TRUST.

Trust in the deed which makes thy own heart stronger
In truth, in purity, in love of right,
Which kindles in thy soul a sufferance longer,
A love more gladdening, tender, hopeful, bright.

Trust in the word within thee which, unspoken,
Leads to forgetfulness of scorn and wrong;
Which keeps the sympathies of life unbroken,
The eternal harmonies of kindness strong.

Trust in the feelings which lead on to trusting
In others, in thyself, in God above;
Unfaith's its root in some low earthly lusting,
Trust makes life strong, harvests its hours with love.

Trust in the light which hath its holy morning
In lowly words of cheer, in friendly homes;
That wisdom pure, which, pent up study scorning,
In the sweet hour of loving friendship comes.

Trust in the peace which comes forgiveness after,
  When hands have pressed and tender words have broken
Some dreary silence, and the healing laughter
  Into the heart's deep core its joy hath spoken.

Trust in the pleasure which has sprung within thee,
  When thou hast flung thy own griefs from thy heart,
Letting earth's sweet familiar voices win thee
  To hope's more genial, more delightful art.

Trust in all things whate'er that lift and lighten,
  In smiles, in tears, in thoughts that whisper peace,
In the sweet bliss of meetings—words that brighten
  The hearts that hear them, make their troubles cease.

Trust in all things whate'er that blend with duty,
  In whate'er word or thought hath strength to give
The heart its freedom, life its native beauty,
  The soul its own grand victory—to live.

HYMN

FOR THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE OF A NEW INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, BLACKBURN.

Under Thy heavens, O Lord, at last
  We stand, our heart's desire to see—
Thy house begun, O to us come,
  For, Lord, our blessing rests with Thee.

We lay this Stone, we raise this Church,
  We think of days when we shall be
Its happy inmates; yet, O Lord,
  Our blessing rests alone with Thee.

We think of days when from its doors
  The music of Thy name shall swell,
Uplifting weary hearts; yet, Lord,
  Our blessing still with Thee doth dwell.

O come, inaugurate our work,
  Our mountains shall before Thee flee;
The mountains of our doubts and fears,
  For, Lord, our blessing rests with Thee.

Kind hearts, strong hands are with us here,
  Men whom Thy Spirit has made free;
And souls long heavened, on us look down,
  Yet, Lord, our blessing rests with Thee.

O come, fulfil the good we seek,
  Pour on this Stone Thy favouring oil,
And give us hearts for Thee to speak,
  And hands for Thee to strive and toil.

Give us Thy living power and might,
  The souls of men to bless and free:
This is our end, for this we build,
  But, Lord, our blessing rests with Thee.

A MORAL FROM NATURE.

Earth is not a valley dire and dreadful—
  A Jehoshaphatic valley grim,
Dark, sepulchral, yielding nothing needful
  Man to comfort, when his hopes grow dim.

Sun is still upon it through all seasons;
  Even winter feels its gladdening glow,
And, upon its bosom—living reasons
  For man's holier hopes—the flowers still grow.

Wholly dark is nothing God created;
  Night eternal with its stars is bright;
And the heart of man, to all related,
  Night and day alike should glow with light.

Bright and joyous are the great world's motions!
  Bright and joyous still his heart should be
Bearing on, as rivers to their oceans,
  Life with gladness, to eternity.

Not for nought has God spread forth earth's beauty,
  Rich with rare mosaics laid its floors;
Wakened sweet, as emblems of man's duty,
  Choirs celestial, at the Day's dark doors.

Not for nought has He, with hand most tender,
  Painted heaven with sapphire and with gold;
And with holy, heart-exalting splendour,
  Panoramic Night's vast chart unrolled.

Everywhere there's something o'er needs measure,
  Something fair to tell us of His love,
Or to soothe the heart with gentle pleasure,
  Calmly lifting it to Heaven above.

Like a holy, earnest, Heaven-sent Preacher,
  A St. Chrysostom, with golden lips,
Like the Christ, of God's pure love the Teacher,
  Nature's truths our doubtful thoughts eclipse.

Undefiled above us, still she utters,
  As God's Messenger to us, His will;
Every breeze that her bright garment flutters
  Having ends of mercy to fulfil.

And upon her waiting, her beholding,
  On the storm-cloud seeing her bright hand,
We at length, our fears with Faith enfolding,
  Purified, may in her presence stand.

"WOMAN'S CLAIMS."

WRITTEN ON READING OF VISCOUNTESS AMBERLEY'S LECTURE AT STROUD.

It is coming! It is coming! Far and wide the signs
are seen,
Freedom speedily on woman shall place her crown
serene;
In the workshop, at the hearthstone, toiling oft with
hope o'erthrown;
In the college, on whose threshold she now stands
weak and lone;
She shall feel the touch of freedom as the valleys
feel the morn,
And the world shall reap new harvests from her
nature's wastes forlorn.

"Equal Rights" has been earth's watchword through
long centuries and vast;
"Equal Rights" the cannon's thundered, and the
martyr sigh'd at last;

Saints at Heaven's high altars standing, patriots at
their country's shrines,
Nations fury led, wrath blinded, following freedom's
fairer signs,
All have sped this message onward, as to-day we
speed it free
From our hearthstones to our altars, for meek
woman's liberty.

Ignorance has been her master, ignorance and
slavish fear;
Science no fair star has lighted in her dark and
narrow sphere,
She has heard the cry of wisdom, it is true, with
yearning heart,
But convention's tongue malignant still has bade
her "stand apart."
"Stand apart" still in her blindness—"stand apart,"
e'en though she be
Priestess at home's holy altars, and the Mother of
the Free.

But her dream of fear is over, hope has found her
soul at last,
And she sees a bright'ning future rise from out the
darkened past,

Sees a time when bound no longer, she shall have
free leave to be
All her inner thoughts aspire to as a woman wise
and free,
And her heart in its pure homage, rightly school'd
to rule and guide,
Shall inspire where now it darkens, all its bounties
multiplied.

Wiselier honour'd, better worshipped, made man's
equal and his peer,
Taught in all the lore he knoweth, heir of the same
mystic sphere,
Woman's life would grow and greaten to fresh
altitudes of thought,
Cast its beauty on the darkness, which the sceptic
years have wrought;
Wake again the faith heroic—still from woman's
heart it springs—
Which gives birth to saints and heroes, and of
common men makes kings.

"Woman's Rights" are not her's only, they are all
the world's beside,
And the whole world faints and suffers, while these
are scorn'd, denied.

Childhood, with its mighty questions, Manhood
with its restless heart,
Life in all its varied phases, standing class from
class apart,
Need the voice, the thought of woman, woman wise
as she shall be,
When at last the erring ages shall in all things make
her Free.

GLADSTONE'S AXE.

Hewer strong, and brave, and bold,
Cut the rotten from the old,
Dead unfruitful privilege,
With thy axe of proven edge,
Overreaching Tyranny.
Cut it down! Where'er it be,
Neither flower will grow nor blade
In its desolating shade.

Cut down prejudice and power
When they darken man's fair hour,
When the light of heaven divine
Through their shadows cannot shine,

When their root in solid worth
Is not planted in the earth;
Cut them down! Let there be room
For the poor man's hope to bloom.

Cut down hatred harsh and pride,
Darkening earth with shadows wide;
Selfishness, whose churlish root
Yieldeth earth nor flower nor fruit;
Scorn, that deemeth God's fair earth
Was made for rank, and not for worth:
Cut them down! Earth needs the bud
To-day of wholesome things and good.

Cut them down! Too long they've stood
Darkening in the gay green wood,
Stood, 'mid things of life and bloom,
Waiting for their heavy doom;
Cut them down! Let hope's new leaf
Prosper for the world's relief,
Leaf of olden Christian life,
Healing all the earth's dark strife.

APRIL RAIN.

"It rains victuals to-day."—*Southern saying.*

Victuals it rains to-day,
  Victuals for rich and poor;
All hearts should be glad and gay,
  The blessing falls once more.

Meadows of richest green,
  And fields of clustered corn,
Gardens of pictured sheen
  The rain will bring this morn.

Like the o'erflowing Nile
  On Egypt's arid land,
'Twill make the glad earth smile
  Plenty on every hand.

Thankful should be all hearts,
  That ever, as of old,
The sun its warmth imparts,
  Sweet rains the buds unfold.

To fill the earth with good,
  To make all bright things grow,
To give the hungry food,
  These rains descending flow.

'Tis sweet to walk among
  The opening flowers to-day,
While heavenly hymns are sung
  By Nature's minstrels gay.

While from the brightening woods,
  After the soft spring rain,
Sweet Nature pours in floods
  Her melodies again.

Dear God, what blessings free,
  Common to all the earth,
Through all the years that be
  For man Thou bringst to birth!

Beauty to feed the eye,
  Music to fill the ear,
Bread for the year's supply,
  Glad life the heart to cheer.

Give, too, the grateful heart,
  The wise, reflecting mind,
The feelings sweet impart
  That human hearts make kind.

TO-DAY.

"One to-day is worth two to-morrow's."—*Old Proverb.*

To-day's the day that wise men use,
  To-day, and not to-morrow;
They use the gold in hand they hold,
  Rather than beg or borrow;
We wait for health, we wait for wealth,
  We wait for friends and favour,
While hope slips from our hearts by stealth,
  Resenting such behaviour.
Contemn to-day and scorn its power,
  With folly cry, "To-morrow!"
And in thy path shall bloom no flower,
  No charm to cheer earth's sorrow.

To-day's the day to put off sloth,
  To put on brave endeavour,
To challenge Time—he's never loth—
  With a bold—Now or never;
To-day's the day Hope's fervent lay,
  Like spheral music thrilling,
To listen wisely, and obey
  With a free heart and willing.

To-day, to-day, young hearts should say—
  I quit you, O, vain pleasure!
Quit you for life's diviner way—
  For nobler toils and treasure.

In weal or woe, in peace or strife,
  In every wind or weather,
To-day's the day for noble life,
  To keep sweet thoughts together;
To keep pure hearts, to seek true charts,
  To stand by truth and duty,
To hold the right in every fight,
  Fill earth with heaven's beauty.
Both fruit and flower, both bee and bird,
  Would surely come to sorrow,
If, by sweet Nature vainly stirred,
  They cried with men, "To-morrow."

To-day! to-day alone we live!
  Where shall we be to-morrow?
Let hope or fear the answer give—
  In gladness or in sorrow.
Use this day's light for actions bright,
  Turn up its barren furrow,
And make it yield a fruitful field,
  With toil and patience thorough.
There lies a harvest in to-day—
  A harvest of rare measure,
That gathered fair, will bless for aye
  Whoever reaps the treasure.

COLUMBUS.

With bleeding hands and throbbing hearts,
  And life a chance of won or failed,
Without a star to mark their parts
  Have men renowned high castles scaled.

Before them rock on rock arose,
  And wall on wall of graspless mould,
And these beyond, outnumbering foes,
  While gulfing waves behind them rolled.

But greater hazard, greater fame,
  And smaller chance the honour more,
Danger to them was but a name,
  Which made their thoughts and wishes truer.

Unawed by might, by pain unquelled,
  By night and numbers undismayed,
Their perilous ascent they held,
  Only of loss of chance afraid.

Great souls but think upon the deed
  Which fills their hearts with strong desire,
The suffering which may be its meed
  Is powerless o'er their spirit's fire.

'Tis this which makes them firm and true
  Through long and dark unprosperous years,
Their joy the deed they seek to do,
  Too firm for doubt, too brave for tears.

'Twas thus Columbus, mocked and jeered,
  Insulted, disappointed, fooled,
Bravely with patience many-yeared
  The vision held, his spirit ruled.

To him an unknown, unsailed sea,
  Of storms unbraved and perils strange,
Fearful to minds of low degree,
  Fabled as death's predestined range,

Was nothing; o'er his mighty thought
  It cast no shadow, darkness none;
Perils, compared with what he sought,
  Were small as specks upon the sun.

And having once his wish achieved
  To sail those solitary seas,
No terrors which weak minds believed,
  Nor his own crew's fierce mutinies:

Had power to make him change his course,
  E'en though his thoughts were all uncrowned—
Within his soul there dwelt a force
  Equal to woe's supremest bound.

His thoughts within his steadfast heart
  Were firm as rocks of mightiest power,
He followed a celestial chart,
  And hope o'erspanned each troubled hour.

His life was nothing if this deed,
  His life's sole aim, were left undone,
Time had for him no other need,
  And therefore feared he danger none.

No hope e'er rose upon his thought
  Of joy in things of peace or ease;
His peril-daring mind had taught
  Him peril's dearer mysteries.

All this beyond, he God believed,
  Believed that over wind and wave,
Whate'er distress their power achieved,
  Was One who ruled, most strong to save.

Believed that Being caused and wrought
  His soul within that one desire,
Which through long years, o'er every thought,
  Shed still its pure unchanging fire.

That so all living men whate'er,
  Might come to know Christ's holier laws,
That worship which exacts no tear—
  The blessed mystery of the Cross.

Fear ever flies faith's sacred flame,
  And through his woe's long-houred night,
Alone with his great solemn aim,
  Columbus kept that white flame bright.

Through days by slow suspense out-doled,
  And weeks whose sands seemed vainly turned,
While fear made scandal lion-bold,
  And evil thoughts in many burned.

He still kept watch with faithful eye,
  The west his vision's anchorage—
Discovery's Saint his hopes grew high,
  Perusing that large promised page.

He lived above all common thought,
  A man of an immeasured soul,
The stars he loved, the stars he sought,
  Circled than earth's a higher pole.

Those holy stars which guide the great,
  And shine beyond all earthly flames—
Those lights of God which power create,
  And fill the world with glorious names.

Long watchings ever end in light,
  Long faithful toil in boundless gain,
At length the outwearied eye through the night,
  Sees hope's fair light shine o'er the main.

Land! land! that sight so long desired,
  The watched for, waited, of all eyes,
At length, like beauty full attired,
  Clave the lone vista of the skies.

The harvest which his faith had sown
  In the dark hours of troubled years,
At last in every grain upgrown,
  Before him waved its golden ears.

His hope, which storms so long had bow'd,
  And threatened often to uproot,
At length he sees with glory proud
  Encrowned, and bearing boundless fruit.

O Son of Time, in whose deep heart
  Reigns like a star one great desire,
Whose object things, thought passless, part
  From thy lorn steps, which never tire.

Assuage thy griefs, and raise thy head,
  And think of the immeasured sea,
Which interposed, like liquid lead,
  Between this Man and destiny.

And yet he triumphed! and thou, too,
  If faithful, firm, and brave as he,
With the same joy of heart shall view
  The world of hope so dear to thee.

OCTOBER.

O! pale October, soft thy suns
  Play round the cottage door,
And clear the brook beneath them runs
  Through meadow and through moor.

And down the road, still summer white,
  And changing hedgerows fair,
Where the dark bramble glistens bright,
  How soft their beauty there.

Like patient eye of mother kind,
  Full of God's grace and truth,
They cast their warmth on every wind,
  Blessing both age and youth.

How pleasant is the woodside now,
  Where underneath the leaves
Hangs the ripe nut, and the brown bough
  The crab tempting cleaves.

And hips and haws, like coral bright,
  Upon the boughs gleam fair,
A picture sweet to boyhood's sight,
  Who roams delighted there;

Devoid of flowers, save where still bright
  The conscious daisy smiles,
The ragged bank from left to right
  His curious eye beguiles;

There oft he finds the purple sloe,
  And o'er it in the height
The elder, shaking high and low
  Its purple clusters bright.

O! sweet the light to fancy's eye
  That wraps all nature now,
Calm, glittering from the smiling sky
  On faded field and bough.

In other years, when life was young,
  How swiftly flew these feet
Up the white road, the leaves among,
  To view those glories sweet.

And now one glint of this soft sun
  Brings all the woodland back,
And fleet my glad thoughts backward run
  On youth's delightful track.

ETHELFLEAD, THE MERCIAN QUEEN.

Through the dim centuries storied, blest
  With tale of hero and of saint,
One form shines out above the rest
  In queenly costume quaint;
'Tis Ethelflead, the Mercian Queen,
  A woman who our nation blest,
Raised up its fortunes low and mean,
  And gave it peace and rest;
The ages dark about her lie,
  She lived—'tis nearly all we know—
She lived and brightened earth and sky
  A thousand years ago.

The people loved her, blessed her still;
  They called her "Ethelflead the Wise;"
She stirred the Saxons' sluggish will,
  Quickened their enterprise;
The builder's trowel rose again,
  Again the smith's fire rose,
She kept at bay the Scot and Dane
  By better things than blows;
Again the oxen trod the soil,
  The wooden plough before,
And hope bedecked the brow of toil
  And prospered him once more.

Long wasted cities rose again,
  The paths of peace she trod,
And taught the Saxon and the Dane
  The nobler truths of God;
She helped to kindle on the age
  The dawn of fairer light;
She helped to close the cruel page
  Of Thor and Odin's night;
She helped to teach the common heart
  The mystic truths and wise
Of the sweet Gospel; break and part
  The cloud of heathen lies.

WINTER FLOODS.

All day the skies—
Like weeping eyes,
Eyes of soft hearts
Which kindest arts
Fail to restrain—
Have poured down rain,
Sometimes so fast,
And with such blast
Of frenzy wild,
That every storm that ever passed
Before, to this seemed mild.

Now where the daisies grew,
And buttercups flashed out among the green
Of the young grass, all pearled with soft May dew,
A flood immense is seen;
A flood both deep and wide,
And restless as the tide
Of ocean wave;
Bearing, with rushing force,
All things upon its course,
Which are not firm allied
To some most solid side
Of strength to save.

Beneath a dark grey sky
These sealike waters lie,—
A sky as void of sun,
As dismal and as dun,
As ever capped the seas
Of the wild Hebrides,
Or made the slow fears start,
In lorn Orcadian heart—
Whose thoughts pursue a boat—
God grant it still may float!—
Of whose scant crew her children's sire makes one.

Troubled and thick and brown,
With rush and roar comes down
This rampant sea;
Making its whirling way,
In frantic perilous play,
With bubbles creamed;
And such resistless mood,
As though the whole dark brood
Of fates and furies in the torrent streamed.

It is a lonely scene!
Great waters, e'en when sheen
Of light most radiant lies upon their face,
Have always a broad trace
Of awe and solemn dread;
And now, when no orb's head

Breaks the sky's dreadful black,
Earth seems to near the track
Of spirit's body free,
Who feel the powers
And live the hours
Of Time's last, longest round—eternity.

Yet it hath beauty, too,
Beauty of nightly hue,
Beauty like Rembrandt drew,
Dark, solemn, dread:
Nature's like a Kaleidoscope, she shows,
Through all her changes, something to oppose
The unpleasant sense
Of feelings which obscure
Thoughts pleasurable and pure,
And reverence,
Possessed by hearts most cold
To hues of blue and gold,
Seen every day,
Might lead the soul to rise
Through sight of these dread skies,
To thoughts almost too great for mortal clay.

PROGRESS.

"My faith is large in time,
And that which shapes it to some better end."
TENNYSON.

PROGRESS.

High-throned Genius of the eternal spheres,
  The passion and the purpose of Heaven's law,
The great upleader of the ceaseless years,
  The conqueror to whom the nations draw;
The life of life, the lightener of the soul,
The quickener of the ages as they roll;
The soul of hope, the true millennial star,
The charioteer of Time's triumphal car.

Order's progenitor, eternal life;
  Right's great restorer, wisdom's grandest source;
God of the later ages! from their strife
  Evolving peace, and giving it new force;

The arbiter of Time, its epochs great
Dispensing, with their wealth and power and state:
Man's guide and hope, each race's strength and stay;
The power that leads them all a fairer way.

Light sprang creative; next it Progress rose—
  Progress eternal, of eternal birth—
The power which life engenders, from which flows
  The far-ascending bounties of the earth;
The power which makes death birth, and from whose sway
Creation thrones the forces of decay;
The strong, subduing, world-sustaining power,
Which for the ages still prepares the hour.

Wealthy as God—Him active represent—
  Progress repairs the forces of the earth,
Revitalizes matter, gives extent
  Of being unto being, worth to worth;
Still active in all natures and all spheres,
The eternal antidote of griefs and fears;
Slow-labouring Time co-operate, day by day
Celestial revolutions mark its way.

Eras of gold, milleniums manifold,
  Hope's dream sublimest in sublimest sense,
Progress, ascending in her orbit bold,
  Makes common fact in her resource immense.
Sovereign of empire, ruler of the earth,
From her vast sources wonders vast have birth;
The thought of thought, Light operate, from her springs,
Ensouling souls, and drawing souls from things.

Immutable, eternal, unarrest,
  The great Creator still anew in deed,
Progress high o'er all powers, of powers the best,
  Renders full-timed to earth her varied need.
The strength of Time, its hope and final end,
She wings the genii that its paths attend;
Revives its currents, keeps its stars elate,
And fills its tides with blessings strange and great.

From everlasting active, Progress still
  Winds the far circuits of the advancing years,
Fulfils all vision, stamps her own great will
  On every circling atom of the spheres.

"Not what has been shall be," she ever cries,
But something better, nobler, and more wise;
Something sublimer, of a loftier state,
Of purpose purer, and diviner fate.

Author of wonders! On her throne sublime,
  The area of creation infinite,
She holds the cipher of eternal time,
  The endless cycles of the spheres of light,
To everlasting; her vast role extends
To everlasting; she Time's steeps ascends;
Seraph and cherub, and the host of heaven,
Making their natures in her glory even.

. . . . . .

PROGRESS! what good of all we have to-day
  But owes its being to thy generous power!
Earth, like a timid slave, beneath thy sway
  Has yielded up to man her boundless dower;
And time and man, compeers in wealth and state,
True to thy truth, eclipsed their former fate;
Kingdoms remote, and nations near and far,
Reviving, brightening with their brightening star.

In all things and in all hath Progress wrought,
  Dowered with her wealth, earth's thousand cities rise,
Their commerce and their craft, her gifts of thought,
  Blessing the earth and making it more wise;
And where no cities are, on sea and land,
Not less nor fewer still her trophies stand,
Proud ships that dare all seas, and roads that reach
Wherever man has needs or thought has speech.

Nor end her marvels here. Where'er the eye
  Or thought still vaster, in its vaster round,
Has vision in the earth, both low and high
  The tributes of her triumph thick abound:
The loaded wain, creaking 'neath burly sheaves;
The far-fenced upland, stocked with brawny beeves;
And thorp and village, large as towns of yore,
Well-dressed, well-schooled, and scarcely known as poor.

Place can't be found where Progress hath not been:
  In every dreamy valley England o'er,
In every land which English eyes have seen,
  Or that hath tidings from its rock-bound shore,

Is something seen which bears its evidence
To this prevailing power's omnipotence;
Something which brings new light into the eye
Of Hope's sweet angel as she wings the sky.

Thrones totter to their base, and sceptres fail,
  The hands that held them helpless grasp the dust;
Queens tremble in their chambers, kings turn pale;
  The people shout from far, "The Lord is just."
Blood flows, earth blooms afresh, new heroes stand
By art emblazoned through th' applauding land,
And sages read the sign the while, and cry
"'Tis Progress! no man may her laws defy!"

Where the blithe husbandman, up with the morn,
  Sows seed to-day upon the fallow lay,
Cheering with snatches from song's golden horn
  The solitudes that bound his lonely way.
Fair cities may have stood, proud capitals,
All grand with tower and trench, and hoary walls,
And pomped within with all the imperial state
Of times barbaric, then, perhaps, called great.

What power's destroyed those cities of the past,
  Traceless to-day as footprints tide o'erswept?
What Goth or Vandal in mock malice cast
  The silence o'er them which age-long they've kept?
The answer's none but—Progress in its tide
Swept o'er their towers; broke down their ramparts
    wide,
And, from the wreck of wealth and art found there,
In fitter place raised firmer and more fair.

Two thousand years ago, in smoke and flame,
  With awful din of music fierce and shrill,
Went up from English soil, in Paynim name,—
  The blood of youths and maids, the fairest still.
Two thousand years ago, where now we stand,
Unclothed, unkempt, unnamed men trod the land;
Their hunting noose and stone and wicker boat
Sole capital that kept their lives afloat.

No Sabbath then on England's breezes sweet—
  Sweet then, though unperfumed by cultured
    flowers,—
Threw its meek silences, its sounds replete
  With soothing virtue, solacing the hours:

Tradition only, bloody, blind, ingrate,
Schooled the poor wanderers in her rites of hate;
Her single end and aim to keep them still
The slaves of her dark power—barbaric will.

Memory all loathful, turning backward now,
  Shuns, all aghast, the record of those days;
Their tragic stories pale her pensive brow;
  Her eyes grow tearful as they strive to gaze.
She sees the demon of man's darker life
Wandering the world, his heart with vices rife;
While no opposing angel, with meek flow
Of accents pitiful, uplifts the low.

Thank God, these times are o'er! these days are past!
  Thank God the Roman and the Teuton came;
Better be slaves, where slavery at last
  Must end in freedom, than but free in name.
Better go on, though driven, than sit at ease
In willing thraldom to life's old degrees.
Better serve Progress—Progress changed all this—
Than rule a changeless state in changeless bliss.

Danes, Jutes, and Normans, hated in their day—
  Fierce priests of Progress, at her altar born,
Unconscious of the power that led their way—
  Renewed the nations that endured their scorn;
They filled with ships the age-long silent seas;
Enriched the vanquished with their victories;
Brought letters, laws, and commerce in their train,
And founded pathways on the unknown main.

The mighty type of old primeval Rome,
  The best of Macedon's and Sparta's race,
Scarce more than rival those who gave our home
  Its first grand marks of terror, strength, and grace.
Egbert and Alfred, Canute wise and just,
The Conqueror, next to Philip's son the first,
With others of less fame, though scarce less power,
In everlasting fame o'er England tower.

In these the Genius of Creation flowed,
  They broke the slumbers of the drowsy earth,
Subdued its times chaotic; on them sowed
  The virtues that to-day form England's worth:

The love of peril, the contempt of ease,
The scorn of being scorned, the scorn to please,
The patience long which mocks the imperious years,
Were theirs, are ours, in glory's bright arrears.

Had these not been—these men of fire and flame—
  These men who flashed their lightnings to the poles,
These men who reigned supreme where'er they came,
  The anointed kings and priests of all men's souls:
What horrors long delayed, what lawless lust,
What ruthless riot, crimes 'gainst truth and trust,
Might still afflict us, still o'erwhelm, bow down
Earth's peaceful nations, England's pride and crown.

These must have been, or earth, to chaos run,
  Long since had darkened on her spheral round,
A vacuum in her orbit; the pale sun
  Amid her shrinking system shrinking found:
Strong in the strength of Time's advancing tide,
They stood, the peers of nature, side by side
With that primeval, life-empowering force
Which gave the worlds their being, guides their course.

These men bequeathed their spirit to the years,
  The future which they fronted brightening fast,
Bequeathed it to the people, England's peers,
  The promise of an age more bright and vast;
From thence despotic rule, protected crime,
Grew less and less secure; with every chime
New rumours filled the air of some new thing,
Hateful to priest or ominous to king.

To this great Spirit, throned above all kings,
  Holding the sceptre of eternal right,
And piercing with its heaven-supported wings
  The abyssmal deeps of Wrong's long-sheltered night,
All things were helpful, every power made
Co-operate, though opposing, to its aid;
By men of wisdom and by men of shame
Alike it wrought its will, fulfilled its aim.

Kings sought to bind it, crush it, it o'er-rule,
  Flattering the past and holding to its side;
And priests and prelates, in their narrow school,
  Untimely humbled, it in rage defied:

They knew not what they did. The power they banned
Was championed by each atom in the land,
By all the stars of heaven, and all the force
That stimulates and strengthens nature's course.

Since those old feuds ferocious, of the past,
Since those dark ages darkly-circling fled,
This spirit, never resting, trophies vast
O'er all the nations of the earth has spread.
Incredulous, bewildered, man now sees
The records of its strength and victories,
Their count and character, together brought,
Impoverishing alike both awe and thought.

. . . . .

Five hundred years ago a vassal race,
A homeless, heartless, miscreant, wandering crew,
Festered in every court-yard, making grace
Of every lawless crime that man could do;
They wore their master's badge, they ate his meat;
They lay among the straw that screened his feet;
Were born and bred, and died, around his door,
Forever vassals, and forever poor.

Five hundred years ago the daisy sweet,
  The darling flower of England's vales and hills,
Flushing the waysides from its meek retreat,
  Companion of whatever life distils,
Was pressed by English slaves on English ground;
The brand, Shame's garland, on their brows oft bound;
Unlettered thralls, linked firmly to the sod,
Whose lives were reckoned with the crop and clod.

No branded slave to-day, with collar'd throat—
  A mask of sorrow on the smiling morn—
Blends in the valleys with their peaceful note
  His woe-worn visage and his sigh forlorn.
No life-long vassal, bound to war and crime,
The feudal victim of a feudal time,
Groans now beneath his bonds against his will,
Dark'ning with horrors every vale and hill.

Freemen to-day till England's honour'd soil;
  Freemen to-day her ships to ocean guide;
Freemen to-day are all her sons of toil,
  By law and knowledge both securely freed;

No rankling bond of serfdom in their blood
Bars them to-day from any gain of good;
The earth to them lies open; and the sea,
Fulfilling their behests, declares them free.

. . . . .

Dark through the ages many a headland breaks,
  Of wrong atrocious against truth and good;
Old error, howe'er seen, the spirit shakes,
  With her fierce features, eyes of rage and blood:
Crimes now unknown, not crimes in truth even then—
The slanders foul of evil times and men—
In times far past, for long relentless years,
Steeped the sad centuries in blood and tears.

Pale Superstition, throned on empire vast,
  Mocked then man's hopes, and all his prayers defied;
She held the nations in her fetters fast,
  And wore their thraldom as her crown of pride.

No pity touched her heart; to aid her feud
She England's highways with the unburied strewed,
Closed every book of good, suspended prayer,
And silenced Sabbath sounds on Sabbath air.

The Inquisition rose—a yoke of fire
  That seared its symbols on the people's heart—
Its allies—ignorance, and pride, and ire;
  Its author—Hatred, skilled in fiendish art:
The terror of the times, their evil thought,
It honoured evil, unto evil wrought—
Its aim and purpose; calling virtue sin,
The soul from heaven's sway to hell's to win.

Dark then were England's sons, unlettered all;
  The priest was guiltless oft of lettered lore;
He knew the prayer he said--that knowledge small
  Was of the ear and tongue, and nothing more.
Like priest, like people. Ignorance held rule,
Mansions were bookless, towns without a school,
And royal hands were oft inadequate
To more than marks below the seal and date.

Not bliss is ignorance. That darkness vast,
  The lingering night of old barbaric years,
Was full of treasons; Crime held far and fast
  Her ancient citadels, her olden spheres;
Rule vile, oppressive, by the worst of kings,
Put forth anew its thousand fangs and stings,
The fair earth darkened, murder-fouled high hands,
And England flamed all o'er with discord's brands.

Progress redressed all this; she had not slept;
  Her spirit strong had ruled ten thousand hearts,
Had comforted the wretched when they wept
  The time's deep treacheries, dark in all their parts.
These fought her battles, wrought her foes defeat;
Led up her triumphs e'en o'er Evil's seat;
Taught tyrants truth, constrained the famous deed,—
The glory and the shame of Runnymede.

Unresting in his soul, the saint and sage,
  Through all time's lapses wrapt in solemn thought,
Is still the same; his soul from age to age
  Is led by Progress, and by Progress taught;

She lures him from the world, and makes his way
The hope-star of the nations lorn and grey;
His word is law, the syllable of Fate,
The mandate on which thrones and powers wait.

Bacon was born, and Montfort, high of fame,
  Higher in what their worth and genius wrought;
They kindled in the darkness Freedom's flame,
  And dowered the ages with the gift of thought;
Devote to science one, the other right,
They fused the elements of future light,
Defied the demon that usurped the earth,
And at her feet wrought Freedom's grandest birth.

That birth, the English Senate—Montfort's deed—
  Twin with the Inquisition in its time,—
Endowed the people with the people's meed,
  And shook the despot's seat in every clime:
Landmark of Progress on the bounds of Night,
Right's friend and ally, ally too of Light,
It succoured Hope, sustained uplifted hands,
And lightened pain-oppressed through all the lands.

On those dark days mediæval, days of strife,
  Light gathered slowly, fenced in all its tides;
Men plodded patiently from life to life,
  With the old mummeries murmured at their sides:
The altars few, yet firm, though roughly cast,
Still held the people faithful to the past;
And town and hamlet, little skilled in thought,
Called knowledge treason—cursed the arts it
    brought.

Those were not days of conscience, spirit-whole,
  Holding unquestioned custom's questioned right;
They left to priestly rule the eternal soul,
  With all its mysteries of eternal light:
The senses reigned supreme; from bell to bell
The red wine sparkled free in hall and cell;
And he who best could tilt and ride at th' ring
Was favourite supreme of lord and king.

Firm-leagued to war and deeds of warlike note,
  Ambition then soared slow, with narrow bound;
The forest fray, or scream of War's wild throat,
  Was all that thrilled men's souls for centuries
    round:

The spirit of the times, a slavish power
That darkened hope from life's first dawning hour,
Ruled ruthlessly o'er all, its baleful breath
Giving to life the dormancy of death.

Yet, while the wine flowed free in monkish cells,
  While the spear flourished, while the war-note
    flew;
While the rude people, slaves of beads and bells,
  Crowned Ignorance as Wisdom, served her true;
While slavish darkness, earth's worst tyranny,
Ruled universal mind with sceptre free—
A spirit strong, safe-fostered by the years,
Was rearing a new era's saints and seers.

Slow ushered on the ages, myrtle-crowned,
  Ecstatic with eternal melody,
The Singer came at last; to him was bound
  The universal world's sovereignty:
Resistless leader, he it was should guide
The destiny of nations up Time's tide;
Earth in her orbit and the stellar spheres
Upon his pathway showering golden years.

Offspring of Progress! from the Saurian age
  Aeons of dateless darkness passed o'er earth
Ere he, the mighty, calm amid earth's rage,
  Gladdened the spheres terrestrial with his birth.
Greece saw him first; later again, at Rome,
He reappeared in Virgil's form and home;
Fair Florence saw him next, in Dante's guise,
Walking at once the World and Paradise.

From thence, in quick succession, on he passed:
  Her poet, too, had England in those years--
Chaucer, who loved the Saxon, made it fast
  In his sweet numbers, greatest of his peers;
He it was who first flamed the native heart
With zeal to follow Learning's magic chart;
He it was who broke chains, rased feudal towers,
And brightened English life with English flowers.

Time fast unfolded now her Genius bright:
  The rule of rulers, Terror's terror true,
Had risen on the darkness; henceforth Light
  Shed far and fast her flushing Eastern hue;

Already Art revived, by Wykeham led,
Had glory on the Thames, in Windsor shed;
And Masons Free—they had not been of yore—
Renewed, with double glory, temples hoar.

Painting had prospered, too; and, England's pride,
  The craft of weaving, slow and sadly born,
Nursed by a woman on Time's gathering tide,
  Renewed its ancient powers, which time had shorn;
Renewed them now to prosper, to increase,
To make our island home a home of peace;
To bless vast peoples, civilize the earth,
And change the themes of fame from war to worth.

The world had wakened; Wycliffe on the air
  Had strewn a phrensy, long and far to spread;
Old dreams had vanished; thoughts divine and fair
  Had risen on the chaos in their stead.
Time teemed with wonders; a new Church and Age
Was ushered in by Wycliffe's righteous rage;
His Saxon text of Scripture, clear and strong,
The current that should bear their hopes along.

To crown these wonders, and to make them sure,
  A wonder greater on the times had sprung,
The art of printing—Light's pole-reaching door,
  That Faustus to the nations open flung.
Great birth of Progress! On the stormy years
It laid the basis of Hope's brightest spheres:
The time of Thought had come, its altar found,
Henceforth to flourish fair on English ground.

Amid foul feuds, and murders, victories great—
  Poictiers and Cressy, Nevil's Cross, Calais,
The Pomfret Tragedy, kind Edward's fate,
  Which glooms the sunlight in the tower to-day—
These wonders prospered; Caxton's maiden page
Fluttered Westminster, in that hideous age
Of royal brawling, when the "Roses Two"
Ran War's red ploughshare all our England through.

Slow-merging from the darkness—slow, but sure,
  The ages circled trembling on the dawn;
Time, heavy with long sleep and thoughts obscure,
  Followed reluctant, by the Morning drawn:

Lapse followed light; light followed lapse again;
Earth rolled impatient; every hill and glen
Pondered the wonder—doubted, hoped, forgot;
But though they slumbered, Morning slumbered not.

Murder was rife, the air was foul with crime;
  Clarence had died in wine, Hastings for "If;"
The time, red handed, rivalled Discord's prime,
  A Niobe its emblem, pale and stiff:
Yet Thought—laborious, patient—in her cell,
Watched through the tumult, sowed and gathered
    well;
Columbus, Diaz, Cabot, by her led,
Doubling the world; while Europe, England bled.

Cradled in storms, a Spirit of the Morn,
  Robust and healthy—destined to endure—
The rising genius of the world, forlorn,
  Struggled for long—imprisoned, lone, and poor;
Yet fostered by Religion, pure and bright,
Its stature mounted and its eyes gained light:
The ravished nations, by its beauty drawn,
Blessing at last its glory and the dawn.

Sad is it now to ponder how the past,
  Fettered to fable, cursed with careless creeds,
Holding dominion with a sceptre vast,
  Contemned the men who wrought earth's noblest deeds.
Accused of witchcraft, treason—fetters vile
Were then the meed of genius; Fortune's smile
Was not for them. Chilled by the niggard years,
They caught their glory through a cloud of tears.

The wonder's double when in times like these
  The soul, all glowing, plighted to its thought,
Pursues its vision o'er lorn virgin seas,
  Or perfects art the world esteems as nought.
Born of a nobler type, a nobler race,
Such souls give every age and time a grace;
Sweet in all climes, their names, their memories blest,
In everlasting love and honour rest.

PART SECOND.

One bird preluding with sweet twits and twoos,
  Softly at dawn, amid the brightening boughs,
Choirs with ten thousand ere the dripping dews
  In the sweet shadows of the valleys house.
So was 't in England. Chaucer's, Wycliffe's word
Grew to ten thousand; every vale was stirred;
Strange songs awoke the morning, and the night
Heard new orisons 'mong her choirs of Light.

Not long, and round the altars, Bible-drest—
  The fruit of Caxton's generous zeal and skill—
Vassals and thralls and pious gentry prest
  To read the God's-spell, in their spirits still.

Strange sight, at morning grey and evening dim,
Those close-cropped Lollards, with their oft-raised
hymn,
Reading the chainèd page with strainèd eyes,
Their thoughts far-fluttering in the upper skies.

A Bible then was worth a large estate,
A book a boon that only wealth might share;
The common mind, uncultured at that date,
Fostered its longings on the common air.
Authors were few. In Europe, not a score
Old plays and ballads, then the people's store,
Caught from the common tongue, their only guard,
Were all the people knew, or England heard.

The Bible—now more bought and sold than read,
Devotion's badge, assumed with Sabbath airs,
More honoured with the hands than heart or head—
Lies now in all men's homes to ease their cares;
Best strength of England: on her floods the ark
That bears, and still has borne, her through the dark.
No ill can prosper, no oppression be
Without its reckoning, where its word is free.

Mightier than sword or senate, priests or kings;
  Mightier than edicts, interdicts, decrees;
Mightier than all the genii whose dim wings
  Upheld the glory of dead mysteries—
The Bible free, an institute of earth,
Changed nations, empires—gave the world new birth;
Rechristianed time, and on its purer flight
Scattered new dawns and days and hours more bright.

Ages had risen and set; a thousand moons
  Had glittered sweetly on the Thames and Trent;
Kings had grown grey, and summer's golden noons
  A thousand times with autumn's silvering blent;
Ere yet this power supreme, this life of life,
Sent its sweet peace through England's ceaseless strife;
Ere yet, enfranchised, it again made free,
Throning on earth a new sovereignty.

Oh! who shall tell the rapture of those hearts
  Who first perused, with slow, laborious pains,
The long-belated treasure; or the arts
  Of household peace recount that blessed their gains!

Rude Saxon churls grew meek, and praise and prayer
Lightened in common homes life's common care;
While thought, expanding in the common mind,
Sowed common joys on every common wind.

Knowledge no more in England restful slept,
  Hearts burnt with longings vast and hopes untold;
The secret blest, by jealous ages kept,
  Had struck into men's souls its orient gold.
No longer Mind supine, at rest with fate,
Forgot its dues and duties, strength and state;
No longer Thought, appalled, restrained its fire,
The victim of dark times and Papal ire.

With one idea, with one common light,
  With one fast bond of love their hearts between,
The ravished people, amorous of the sight,
  Pursued the glory that their hearts had seen:
Vain was the menace dire, the irate scorn
Of courts and councils; still upon the morn,
Soft lighted by the stars or sweeter sun,
Thrills of the deepest peace and pleasure won.

Fear, the base lord of traitors, mean of thought,
  Recreant of good, to foul dishonour born,
Ne'er counselled these fair spirits, never taught
  Their hearts one letter of his creed forlorn.
Deep in their souls, nor seldom on their tongues,
They bore the name of Cobham and his wrongs,—
A memory fearful; yet, with equal zest
They watched and waited where the faithful prest.

Oft sad, oft weary, perill'd oft, in pain
  Through every moment, by all currents vexed,
They still bore forward, on Time's cumbered plain,
  The standard of their faith—Truth's holy text.
Sleepless and easeless, what they knew they told,
Their hearts' new wonder never waxing old;
And Love's soft pinion, faithful to its bound,
A place and blessing for their word still found.

So gathered on the ages, brightening still,
  Stronger by every pang its bearers bore,
That Truth transcendant, which from hill to hill
  Now owns its worship on each English shore;

Sublime in suffering and sublime in deed,
Its first, last readers, Christendom's new seed—
Heroes forever in immortal climes—
Made it the envy of all hearts and times.

This was the power progressive that made clean
  The Land of Idols, traffic in men's souls;
That o'erthrew saintly shrines with all their sheen,
  And consecrated new and truer goals.
Dubious devotion, hedged and fenced, no more,
Could con her beads and chant her aves secure;
Nor avaricious priests, intent on gain,
Cancel unquestioned Crime's eternal stain.

The hero of the age, the Bible's seer—
  Another Baptist in another age—
Had risen on the times, their priest severe,
  Holding the Truth against the people's rage.
Born of a peasant, child of lowly name,
He gave an age its character and fame;
Led up a thousand leagues earth's timid race,
And throned the soul in Judgment's highest place.

'Mid the sweet hawthorn, in the soft spring airs,
  Serenely thoughtful as the glebe he broke,
The English ploughman, crushed with cares and snares,
  Pondered the times behind his horned yoke.
He saw the sweet spring violet blushing bright,
Showering its incense on the golden light;
He saw the pensive primrose, dazzling fair,
And glory mingled with his inner prayer.

Penance and pains, and vigils long and drear,
  The sheet and torch, the Church's common sight,
Touching his memory in that moment clear,
  Grew monstrous in the day's absolving light.
Another faith, the one of which he'd heard,
Had flashed upon the world in Luther's word;
Kindled his spirit, king'd his ready will,
And made his flame-proof heart its hero still.

Sweet then the breath of even, the light of morn;
  The day's full glory animate with bliss
To those who watched and waited, scorning scorn,
  Fast leagued in love by Hope's sweet charities.

Dearly together, by sad sorrow tried,
They held communion on Time's trustless tide;
Their Faith's full glory, globing still more even,
Linking new lustre to each star of heaven.

Brave souls and faithful! Time, in its vast course,
  Far deep in ages now beyond recount,
Sustained by life heroic from its source,
  Than these had never fairer from its fount.
Death lurked in every wind, yet still their deeds
Affirmed a change of life as well as creeds,
Bannered their brows, and tokened all to see
Where their hearts worshipped, and what Deity.

The Sea, with its vast murmur, deep and loud,
  Hymning the eternal round the changeful earth,
Washing the daisied hills and mountains proud,
  Their changeless ally from creation's birth—
Long watching round her coasts from day to night,
From night to day reflecting every light,
Had caught new voices—tones that on its tide,
Envious of empire, grew and multiplied.

England had changed. Old faiths and feuds had
passed;
The plough of Progress much had rased and bared;
Hierarchial rule had ended. Following fast,
The rule of Ignorance its ruin shared.
Prayer had awakened thought—such is its meed;
Thought grew to knowledge, knowledge unto deed.
Men rose like giants; learning ran and leaped,
And Progress everywhere its trophies reaped.

These were the demigods, the kings of men,
Hebrew in type, of old heroic mould,
That bore the ark of God; long lost, again,
Over the waves, as in the days of old.
Time waited on their wills, and kings, aghast—
The helpless minions of a helpless past,
Cancelling their curses with ambition vain—
Followed as vassals in their royal train.

Followers of Huss, whose ashes on the air,
Fruitful of life, had borne a martyr race—
These holy heroes, recusants of care,
Hymned heaven immortal in Death's fearful face.

Sweet earth, beloved so long, dear faces meet
With life-worn smiles and homely graces sweet—
All joys that memory treasures, or hope sings,
For them spread vainly their earth-fluttering wings.

Light, with its rosy finger, wanton, sweet,
  Touched their sad lids, all-amorous as morn broke;
And day's soft sapphire, waiting on their feet,
  Covering dear homes, to them of gladness spoke.
But dearer death to them than any thought
Of peace, or pleasure, if the boon were bought
With spirit freedom, or that gift of light,
Which, rising on the times, had made them bright.

O, England! England! now thy cup is full;
  Now on thy marts no more blaze living fires;
Now no more on thy roadsides the white skull
  Scares the lorn wanderer through thy bounteous
    shires;
Now prisoned saints no more God's praises hymn
At midnight, on thy airs, from dungeons dim:
Bethink ye sometimes, 'mid your gain and ease,
Of those brave hearts who wrought your victories.

Freedom's elect, these souls truth's stormy fate
  Defended 'gainst a world—themselves but few;
They stormed the walls of darkness, won their gate,
  And light's glad armies thenceforth followed through.
High o'er the ages, scorning earthly powers,
They led their triumphs, vanquishing the hours;
And one with nature and the rolling spheres,
Their deeds immortal still sustain the years.

Farewell, brave spirits, yet not all farewell,
  Ye should be always with us, in our pain,
Remembering you, we break earth's troubled spell,
  And mount above our sorrows strong again.
Rest with us, then, rest with us; let farewell
Have no vast meaning; where the faithful dwell
There ye should be for ever, to set free
All that man holds of immortality.

Time rolls, the ages gather, and fate roars
  Interminable, eternal, round life's coasts,
And hearts look upward, upward from thought's shores,
Questioning the heavens and all their starry hosts.

They answer not, ye Blest, but ye, your souls
Thrill ours with fervent wisdom from heaven's poles
Rest with us, then, rest with us, still with you
Our hearts will triumph, truth will triumph too.

Ye need us not, Immortals! on your wings
  Shines that sweet constant light that never nights,
And ye are high and mighty, priests and kings,
  Honoured o'er all, in heaven's eternal heights.
But we are dark and sad, time curves our course;
We need your spirits, need your ancient force;
Need that great life ye nourished, brave and wise,
From which new centuries and new cycles rise.

Rest with us, then, rest with us, on time's hills
  Shake the sweet incense of your golden wings;
We need an air about us that distils
  The deeds of heroes and the state of kings;
We need that vision vast, that solid strength,
Which gave your courage its vast breadth and length;
We need that hope columnar, on whose height
Your souls abiding, knew nor clouds nor night.

Take no farewell, then, ever with us dwell;
  In our deep sorrows, in our dearth of light,
In our long watchings let us feel the swell
  And flutter of your breath and robes of white.
Be with us always, still upon the air
We breathe and cherish, shed some influence fair;
Old shadows linger, and old bonds remain,
Be with us, Brave Ones, in God's fight again.

Part Third.

A thousand years and Progress grandly shows;
  A thousand years men say "We've travelled fast;"
A thousand years and those who were its foes
  Will say, "We're far advancing on the past."
Man is not microscopic, cannot see
The thousand little's that make great's degree;
Earth still advances, still its ancient ray
Grows fairer, brighter with each rising day.

Progress keeps on for ever; while men sleep
  She grows her harvests, brings her thoughts to birth;
Weaves her long web of wonders, which still keep,
  Through long millenniums, name and place on earth.

She never slumbers; in her upward eyes
Glitter the lights of purer climes and skies:
These still she follows, gladdening earth and sea
With her fair visage, which makes all things free.

A thousand years the seed will hold its life;
  A thousand years and life will bloom again;
A thousand years and Truth's immortal strife
  Will break at last time's soul-controlling chain.
There lives a spirit in the soul of things
Which shapes, unseen, a new creation's wings;—
Life has no pauses, still it mounts and mounts,
Pouring fresh ichor from its golden founts.

The tyrannous past, tenacious, dying slow,
  Cleaves to the earth and holds it, rules too long,
Yet always comes its hour; forever grow
  The scourges which must vanquish ancient wrong.
Progress prevails forever! always men
Oppressed and darkened, find their gods again;
Old bonds are always broken, and old pains
Exchanged forever for light's fairer gains.

Something has changed in England since one stake
  Held clustered round it in one lurid flame
Three different traitors, each for truth's sweet sake
  Condemned to bear the martyr's holy name.
Men cannot now be slain for thought or creed,
Or broken on the rack for conscience' deed;
Or hunted from their homes and bound in chains,
For the pure practice of prayer's holy pains.

Men would not sit to-day in quiet homes,
  Unmoved to action, while their brethren bled;
Or with the curious crowd that ever roams,
  See passionless the stake's procession led.
That slavish spirit which, submitting, bore
Old tyrannies and terrors, rules no more;
It slumbers with the past, can ne'er again
Fold its dark forces o'er the souls of men.

The world's not faultless yet—may never be;
  But wholesome changes, ripening with the years,
Have brought forth in it a sublime degree
  Of that firm feeling which defies all fears.

It is not what it was; advance has crept
Up the dim ages, while the dead have slept;
And still advance proceedeth, still the years
Fold in their flight eternal, nobler spheres.

Barbaric states may have some noble souls—
  Some Arthur, Alfred, Canute, Charlemagne;
Some spirits vast who reach perfection's poles,
  Their lives colossal without flaw or stain.
But where advance has been, and where it keeps,
All men are nobler, each its harvests reaps;
Moved at the centre, the circumference moves,
And the great world the cordial current proves.

The times seem distant now, half-fabulous, strange,
  When life was held at nothing, and the knife
Dismembered the quick body ere the change
  Produced by the vile shock had ended life;
Since the hot heart, its weary pulse scarce o'er,
Was thrown in the stark face in reeking gore;
A crowd surrounding, with fierce speech and eye
Assailing the mute sufferer's latest sigh.

Nor was it strange to see in those rude times,
  At castle gates, or on their hoary towers,
A dozen hostages, guiltless of crimes—
  Sweet boys fair-haired, and meek as April flowers,
Hung up remorseless to the withering day,
Some pledge forgotten, unredeemed, to pay;—
Their mothers' hearts, by faithful memory prest,
Darkened for ever by the time's fierce test.

The dungeons of old castles, and their keeps,
  Shew with what vengeance, with what cruel strain,
Ancestral Britain, in her frenzied leaps
  Of rule despotic, crushed her sons with pain.
The rings, and bolts, and bars, and loopless walls
Of those damp dungeons, now the heart appals;
Here, unrecumbent, as the fact appears,
Men bore incessant torture months and years.

Old times were times of blood; the land is steeped
  In mournful memories of their rigid rule;
They bann'd and bound, and in one death-roll heaped
  Unscrupulous together saint and fool.

We tread meek spots to-day, where now repose
Smiles o'er the landscape, and the daisy grows;
Whose names, acquired from custom, witness clear
What deeds of blood and grief old time sowed here.

Sailing up the fair Thames, in days of yore—
  Days gloried as "The Good" by Fame's deft
    tongue—
Begirt with foreign nobles, prelates hoar,
  And ladies, innocent and fair and young,
Our glorious Bess, ecstatic with her power,
Once pointed to her capital's proud tower,
Ghastly with recreant heads, and, smiling, cried,
"Thus, gentlemen, my rebel lords I chide!"

No recreant heads gleam on our towers to-day,
  Breathing out horror on the mid-day air;
No prince nor peasant 'neath Victoria's sway
  Has such a wrong to dread, or wrong to bear.
The times have changed; the terrors of the past
Are flowing into fable fair and fast;
Progress has rusted the grim headsman's knife,
And made states safer with a safer life.

Unlingeringly the world moves on to good,
  Through all that chaos of unthinking zeal;
A living power and presence ruled each mood,
  And swayed the vagaries of fire and steel.
The slain lived on and ruled, fire could not kill,
And freedom-loving nature kept their will,
Dispensed their thoughts sublime, their courage fair,
And prospered their fine fervour everywhere.

Men deemed the world was ending; to their fear
  The Apocalyptic vision seemed fulfilled;
The evidence was fair, the symbols clear,
  But no millennium age the tumult stilled:
The miracle was in that common strength
That overmatched the evil, won at length
Its victories for good, and from it drew
For Progress fairer triumphs, truth more true.

The sword of persecution, bright for years,
  Used bitterliest where Seine's slow waters flow,
The direful strength of Alba and his peers,
  Beside the Scheldt and Rhine on Flemish foe,

Still weak in its own cause, was strong where power
Latent or lingering waited its fair hour.
Mind mounted where it came, and speech and deed
In peril's hour still equalled peril's need.

It wasted cities; men before it fled
  Sad beggared fugitives on every wind,
Fear in their wake, and famine at their head,
  And round them everywhere a world unkind;
But stronger than itself, of surer heed,
The spirit it enkindled—in their need
These men found freedom, and their crafty hands
Founded an empire which subverts all lands.

Where busy Irwell and its affluent flow,
  Black with the reek of traffic and its tire,
These fugitives, three centuries ago—
  Impelled by Spain's exterminating ire—
Set up their Flemish looms and plied their skill,
Fashioning the fate of commerce to their will,
Towns rising round them, now long known to fame,
The destined guardians of fair freedom's name.

Proud Liberty! the hope of all the earth,
  Still vanquishes Oppression, doomed to fall;
The delegate of heaven, the friend of worth,
  It rides the fury of this narrow ball.
Man, in his haughty or his selfish moods,
When, cursed of God, he hell on earth intrudes,
Has not a shaft in all his vile array
Can humble Liberty, or thwart its way.

O keep your hearts serene, ye thralled and bound,
  Ye thousand slaves that tread the tropic clime,
Ye bonds of East and West, whose bleeding wound
  Of injured manhood mars this comely time;
And ye, oppressed by laws unkind, unfair,
That check the angel and impel despair,
Ye shall be freed—freed all; sweet Liberty,
The world's benignant power, shall set you free.

In the great ages of earth's golden prime,
  All races and all nations shall be free;
Love shall uplift the world; its power sublime
  Gain over all things right and victory.

And Moor and Mongol, and the Ethiop grave,
And those that bathe their brow in Azof's wave,
With the worn slave of Europe's slaves of gold,
As Freedom's sons shall have their honours told.

Up the fair Future, earth's eternal joy,
  Gleams out an era of eternal peace;
And in it all that lingers to destroy,
  And all that blinds or binds shall fail and cease;
And man, ennobled by earth's nobler air,
Shall wear his crown of manhood everywhere;
Shall stand, as erst in Eden, blest and free,
The subject of his own sovereignty.

. . . . . .

Part Fourth.

Eternal God! thy spirit never dies;
  Still on the pestilence and on the blast
Wings hover merciful; still on thy skies,
  Divine from everlasting, light is cast,
Thou art, and up to thee creation mounts;
Thou art, and life flows brightening from its founts;
Thou art, and time unchanging, changing still,
Renewed forever, glorifies thy will.

There is no power but thine, and thine is great;
  Thou lift'st the world as the wind lifts the sea
From out its dreary levels, its mean state,
  To whirls of passionate hope and ecstasy;
Where eyes look upward, where hearts yearn for light,
Stream forth thy glories still on Time's vast night;
And earth, thine own—still thine, still wholly thine,
Teems with new wonders, miracles divine.

There came an hour to England, when her kings,
  Faithless to conscience and the public weal,
Forgot that God was God, and on their strings
  The puppets of dominion, tried Fate's wheel;
But Fate, against them, always leagued with heaven,
Where they but thought for evil to lay even,
Furrowed for God, her mighty harvest's seed,
The strength of England in her hour of need.

O men supine! when sluggish in the soul
  Thought's currents run, and drowsy powers unblest
Their irksome incubus upon you roll,
  And sense-usurping soul craves traitorous rest.
Look from yourselves, from all your fears and tears,
To England as it was in Cromwell's years,
And see how simple faith and piety,
Assailed by tyrants, vanquished tyranny.

'Twas despotism's last struggle, and the fray
  Was hard and earnest—witness Marston Moor—
On that sweet summer's night four thousand lay
  Bedded in blood to waken never more.

England was sown with dead, on Naseby Field;
Death reaped a harvest of no common yield;
And Preston, Dunbar, Worcester—"Mercy's crown"
Hid slaughtered thousands 'neath their furrows
brown.

The weak subdued the strong, high place and birth
Succumbed to men of lowly fame and name,
And honest-hearted honourable worth,
Strengthened by Heaven, brought shameless kings
to shame;
God, by his judgments, on that stormy tide
Crushed those who scorned his truth, his laws defied,
And once more led his hosts, his faithful free,
Through the dried currents of a yawning sea.

Eternal power of time, eternal right
Rules earth without a rival, against ill;
Its judgments, prospering, bring forth fairer light
And vaster blessings for the nations still.
Man, armed with treachery against man or heaven,
Finds but the ill he dares; his paths uneven
No angel traverses, no seraph wings;
And day but brings him darkness sorrow brings.

Earth cannot be held back in its fair course
  By will of man or theories of kings;
Unsound, immoral these; health is its force,
  And, prospering ever, on its way it springs.
Man must be true to prosper—true as earth,
As heaven true, which gave his spirit birth;
Untrue he fails, and falls, against his might—
A Shadow, vain, abnormal, all things fight.

He lies, O God! lies deeply—from thy ways
  An unblest wanderer—who on thy light,
Thy truth, which shines with ever-widening rays,
  Would fix his own vain limits, Thee despite;
Thy Truth must grow forever; it, like Thee,
Has life and being; its divinity
Must needs expand and brighten, needs increase;
Its energies Time's glory and Earth's peace.

The Stuarts, mad against it, sworn to lies,
  Renewed a heathen warfare in these lands;
Brought back the spirit of dead centuries,
  And menaced heaven with earthly bolts and bands.

They fell; a Cromwell and his mighty peers,
With more than Roman virtue, swayed the years;
And Truth triumphant, greater from the stress,
Became again Time's strength and arbitress.

"There is no God but God!" the Moslems cry,
From mosque and minaret, and through their streets;
And travellers, as they each to each draw nigh,
Repeat it, weary 'neath the desert heats.
Vain spoken oft by them, its import lost,
'Tis still the life of nations—what theirs cost;
And he who disallows it, dissipate,
Shall feel its force destructive soon or late.

Learn God in history, and you'll learn him well;
He lays the oppressor low forevermore.
Short course has tyranny; its early knell
Still succours hope, and makes the world's faith sure.
Man's bound to that which blesses; cursed, he turns
And blasts the beauty that his soul inurns;
Thenceforth, detract from nature and from heaven,
His life flows darkening—nothing gained or given.

Good sprang from all the evil of those times —
  From all the evils that had gone before;
Those acts which straitened conscience, coined new
    crimes,
  Whetted the edge of thought, and made it truer.
Men rose gigantic, strong to dare and do,
Their minds enlightened by their spirits true;
And Truth, most loyal still where most oppressed,
Again the nations, with new visions blest.

Strange ways has Providence to prove her ends,
  She rules the treachery of man's evil mood,
And all the madness that vile strife attends,
  To the pure uses of a common good.
Man wills; she wills his will; his thought her thought
Frames to pure purposes he never sought;
And still, whate'er his side, whate'er his part,
Her's are the ends of mind, and soul, and heart.

Who thought in England, when the Atlantic tide
  Teemed with sad exiles, chased from home and
    rest,
That those bare units, blessed and multiplied,
  Would beggar eastern fable in the west;

Who thought the spirit, and the truths they bore,
Would rule for centuries, chasten nations hoar?
That Liberty sped with them? and that earth
Would in their future perfect human worth?

Was it coincidence? mere common chance?
  That a new world, unpeopled, rich and rare,
Waited those injured Meek Ones, who its trance
  Of desolation broke, with praise and prayer?
Or were they guideless, when their anchor dropt—
The last fierce wave of storm and tempest topt—
From ignominy safe, safe from the sea,
They chartered on those coasts a worship free?

He who holds God a myth, who never knows
  A thought above his ledger and the stocks;
Who ne'er was crushed with cares or wasting woes,
  Or hurled precipitate on ruin's rocks,
May cry—mere accident! a chance! a fate!
But when did accident create a state?
Or when did fate and chance, inapt and vain,
So prosper evil, and its cause maintain?

Most marvellous is life! most intricate!
  And, like the day, all beauteous in its flow,
Its very brightness, which doth worlds create,
  Hides others vast and fairer in its glow;
We verge rare orbs and grand we never see;—
Our lives themselves are orbs of mystery,
And we mere surface dwellers, in their deeps,
As yet know nothing what there lives and sleeps.

Why should we dwarf the Power which made us all?
  A painted god were scarcely worse or less
Than one who, having made, could serve no call
  Of human sorrow, man to aid or bless.
God, to be God, must compass and unite
All forms of blessing, small and infinite;
Must have the power to act with motion free—
A God in all things—even in liberty.

What hope had suffering virtue in its need,
  If Heaven, degenerate, like the powers of earth,
Had lost its primal function, failed the deed,
  Which still awaits miraculous on worth?

He who would limit God to this, or this,
A negative succeeding, still must miss
His Deity complete—an error worse
Than Brahma's worship, and a greater curse.

He who yon purple heavens, with worlds made bright,
  Worlds that roll beauteous, safe from every blast,
Worlds, as His Being, vast and infinite!
  Their meanest atom on His mercy cast;
Must have the power to interpose his will
To work the miracle of mercy still;
His creatures, as His worlds, defended well
From the storm's fury, and the tempest's swell.

. . . . .

Great Truths, as yet but half fulfilled, half learned,
  Fell resonant with music, bright with light,
From those great souls who, centuries long, were spurned,
  As peaceless recreants from the common right;

Once more they heard, as though through mystic
shells,
Eternity's far echoes and its swells;
And once more, through their hearts serene and free,
Rolled all Time's meaning and its mystery.

Light, like a new-born spirit, on those times,
Gained new proportions every rising hour;
An angel of pure light, amid vile crimes,
It fluttered those who cursed it, marr'd their power;
Like flowers which know their season, it flushed out
A face of beauty, all the world about;
And men enamoured of its glowing light,
Cherished its splendours, death and doom despite.

Men ne'er to be forgotten, men whose names
Light history with a glory never dim;
Men whose great spirits, like immortal flames,
Still keep the growing centuries' topmost rim,
Sprung glorious on those times, their lives a part
Of the old harmony that rules Time's heart;
Their thoughts far-piercing, like clear suns at morn,
The measure and degree of times unborn.

Such men were Spenser, Shakspere, Hampden, Fox,
  Cromwell and Milton; life was life to them;
They did not wail, as we, the falls and shocks
  Of air and nerves, but firm upon the stem
Of conscious duty, every hour laid
A fruitful beauty both on sun and shade;
In season with the world, its ripening light
Soul of their souls, and secret of their might.

These names will live a thousand years at least,
  The soul of England still through all her parts;
They operate their will, quelling the beast
  Of brutal nature in her people's hearts,
And guiding them divinely; and her name
Of splendid greatness, flows from their great fame—
Flows from their life and spirit, which still shed
A potent glory round her ancient head.

Earth mounted with these men, mounts with them still;
  They touched its heart with their ecstatic thought,
Touched it with tenderness, as on a hill,
  The world-beam strikes the sod, and flowers are wrought.

Their lives gave life to all things; every power
Of the dead world sprang fruitful on their hour;
Pure airs came with them, as with summer's tide,
And every germ of good was multiplied.

O kings uncrowned, not crownless! still our hearts
  Are touched by yours, as though our lives were one;
The present, panoramic, still departs,
  But ye are with us still from sun to sun—
Close, close unto us—still so close, that thought
That we call ours, is by your spirits wrought—
So close that every breath the world above
Seems some faint stirring of your ancient love.

And when our hearts, unresting, seek pure peace,
  And the tide overflows them, of pure thought;
When the world's noisy tongues that hold us cease,
  And all the troubled soul to rest is wrought,
'Tis then *your* spirit greater than our own,
Which thrills us with a sense of things unknown,
Which folds us in a glory which makes bright
Our fleeting moments with eternal light.

Kings of the silent centuries, lords of life,
  Above us, but still of us—ours by blood;
So penetrate us still, that still our strife
  May flow, world-brightening, as yours flowed, to good.
We are, and are not; Time betrays our souls,
And heavily and thick life's current rolls;
But in your light o'erflowing, in your sphere
Of thought eternal, hope prevails o'er fear.

Link'd with that power which brings the ages light,
  Fill'd with that spirit which sets nations free,
Yours was the glory which, once born, makes bright
  All living nature—man, and earth, and sea;
Ye touched the elements, and souls far-thrilled
In their dim fables, fierce and cruel-willed,
Looked up, and lightened, freed from all the fear
That haunts the shadows of our spirits here.

O that your wills were ours, ye sons of power,
  Or we, as you, divest of earthly fear,
That our long-wintered souls might find their flower,
  And our long night of life shoot dayward here.

Work o'er thy ancient miracle, O God!
And let our barren souls, like Aaron's rod,
Bud at thy bidding all their powers divine,
Quickened and crowned, and fruitful made by thine.

Part Fifth.

God, let thy hands make men; earth needs life still;
  Needs man supremely—man, the first and last;
He comes, comes born of Thee, souled by thy will,
  And still new futures gleam upon the past:
Thou mad'st the world through him—him still thy
    blest,
And still thy powers divine upon him rest;
And he the godlike, he alone still bears
From off the world its old and sad despairs.

Send many, O thou Great One, from thy soul,
  Affluent in man, man affluent of Thee,
The world gains all its freedom, every goal
  That crowns or comforts vast humanity.

Man holds thy own great nature, by thee blest,
And earth increases while he gives it rest.
Let there be men, O Lord! a man's a birth
Of good and glory still for all the earth.

Who asks if there's been Progress? Let him seek
  The men who've blest the ages, made them bright.
'Tis men that make earth's history, men who speak
  The everlasting truth that gives earth light.
Let but a man be born, upright, divine—
Poet, or saint, or seer—and straight shall shine
New light on all men; and that one man's power,
Shall thrill the world's heart in its crowning hour.

Progress consists in that which never dies,
  The ever greatening sum of noble life;
The good which works pure good, which makes more wise
  The lorn and lowly; lessens want and strife;
More peaceful nations, peoples less distraught
In all that fosters peace and wakens thought:
These are the signs of Progress, these best show
What powers have been arrested, and what grow.

The sacred influence that moves the earth
  Flows from within, eternal, still divine;
The Godhead active, working out the birth
  Of Time's heroic, Ages more benign.
Sometimes Invention, some poor dreamer's thought
Become substantial, to perfection brought,
Subserves its outflow; sometimes Science, blent
Profound with nature, works its grand intent.

Sometimes the Poet's song—intransient, wrapt,
  Up to the stars, devout, with flowing line—
Fulfils its ends, its meanings, pure and apt.
  Rousing the world with energies divine.
And sometimes the Saint's vision, chiefest, best,
Its own clear effluence, soul of all the rest,
Gives it supremacy; old faiths and vain
Through it subsiding, ne'er to rise again.

Earth never fails this glory; still he lives
  Whose eye, or ear, or thought has caught its power;
And still it fills his heart; and still he gives
  The world his gladness, fruit as well as flower:

This done, there's nothing wanting; for his strength
Becomes the world's, and blesses all at length;
Its vital flow diffusive, hailed and blest,
Restoring Time, and giving hearts true rest.

O Souls above us! heaven'd by death too soon,
  Unknown to Fame, unautographed, unsung,
The foreworld's saints and poets, whose sweet rune,
  Or high devotion, long entranced earth's tongue;
Ye did not live in vain, your uplift eyes,
Fraught with Heaven's wisdom, and its charities,
Were stars that kindled others, lights that drew
The world to fairer wisdoms than it knew.

And ye about us still, the sad unknown,
  Battling with Time and its ten thousand ills;
Your hearts, high-purposed, shielding truths; their own,
  Sustained by Him, who all things is and fills;
Ye too shall have your blessing, your deep thought
Voiced high, sublimely, into knowledge wrought,
Shall mount, and rule, and prosper years unborn,
Lighted and blest by what to-day men scorn.

True spirits everywhere, known or unknown,
  Serving in faithfulness, or low or high,
Your hearts unfaltering, steadfast still, though lone,
  To misery's murmur, and to sorrow's cry:
You have your meed, your blessing; your heart's rest
Shall come in all its fulness, for earth, blest,
Shall rise, through your endeavour, through your strife,
To Freedom's nobler victories, nobler life.

Progress has deeper roots than those we see;
  The souls that weep and pray, athirst for light,
Restless in darkness, longing to be free
  From life-long shadows—prisoners of the night—
Are souls that bring new eras; their sad hearts
Starr'd in their darkness, Time's unerring charts—
Still bear the record—Hope's sustaining soul—
Of years eternal, rising as they roll.

Progress is life. The world long since had sunk
  From its high orbit, pendant on the skies,
To endless nillity, withered and shrunk
  By evil uses, meretricious lies,

Had not man's heart more faithful, faithful borne,
The world's stronghold and hope in times forlorn;
Kept Truth's severer way, its thoughts sublime,
The watchwords of the ages, guides of time.

God is the soul of Being, the vast Power—
  Man's hope and comfort while the years decay—
That leads his creature man from hour to hour,
  Forever onward on his upward way;
Present in man profound, 'tis from him flow
Time's endless futures, ripening as they grow;
His spirit strong, unlimited, unspent,
Through all the ages with his creatures' blent.

The hearts that dwell in duty dwell in him;
  He stars the skies, where worshippers adore;
Souls tremble in their sorrow, dark and dim;
  He gives them light, which spreads for evermore;
They rest, and earth rests with them; their hope's star,
A world of glory, brightening hearts afar,
Becomes earth's guide and blessing—the sweet strength
Which makes the hero and the sage at length.

Earth knows no Progress where it knows no God;
  Feeling this power, man's sensuous self decays,
His angel brightens; where he walks, the sod
  Retains his footprints; Time brings better days.
Life's miracle and glory, its intent,
Are lost and broken, from the spirit rent,
Where—He its end and author yet unseen—
Man moves, a darkness, earth and heaven between.

Invisible to us He works and lives,
  His mighty thoughts the seeds of things to be;
Upspringing safely where His spirit gives
  The ear to hearken and the eye to see.
So comes his kingdom; so his truth is spread,
So man is forward by his spirit led;
His inspirations the great Soul of Time,
Earth's one great glory, its one hope sublime.

Oh, England! oh, my England, grand and great;
  The land of wealth, the land of manual skill,
The land of genius, where the gods keep state
  O'er urns whose ashes are earth's masters still:

The land of brave men, and the land of free,
The land of home-born joys and piety;
The land of Time's great triumphs, victories vast:
Thy God has been thy glory first and last.

Thou sat'st among the nations, weak and low,
  The mark of conquest in its wandering flight,
The prey of strangers, hope of every foe
  Who sought thy waters, found thy oceans bright;
Yet still thou mounted, saints within thee prayed,
And thou hadst Warriors whose great hearts were laid
Unblemished on thy altars, gifts to be,
The quickening glories of all history.

Thy stars have brightened England with thy saints
  With thy great faithful spirits, strong and just;
With thy brave toilers, men whom history paints
  As something more divine than common dust:
Thy heart and Spirit, all thy soul to-day
Theirs, still within thee, strong through time's decay;
Thy sense in all things, and in all thy thought
From theirs declining, by their raptures wrought.

And this great age, this great far-spread to-day,
  This Himalay of time, above all pasts;
This mighty present, gracious in its sway,
  And glorious in the hopes it o'er us casts;
This stride of intellect, this steep of thought,
From far-off founts of olden power was brought,
Its real source and head, the Life sublime
Of times forgotten, souls unknown to time.

Time flows with all that's noble—every thought
  That lifts the thinker's spirit, every prayer
That flows with sweetness, as by Heaven taught,
  Lightening the day, and making void its care—
Is Nature striving forward, the pure flow
Of Spirit in its motion, and must grow
To purest truth and beauty, unto power,
To be the soul of blessing in its hour.

Oh for those royal times, those days again
  When life was earnest and when thought was true;
When England's soul was deeper, and her men
  To freedom's glorious need and measure grew:

These times are still our glory; all our thought
Is from their courage and their spirit wrought,
And from their life—the life of noble souls—
The world's great tidal wave of Progress rolls.

We talk of schools and teachers—iron rules;—
  We've faith in everything but human souls;—
But vain are institutions, vain are schools,
  Through which no living flow of Spirit rolls:
'Tis the great Soul about us, clear and deep,
Ensouled by Deity, that breaks our sleep;
That gives us back our being, sets us free
From ignorance, and sin, and misery.

We have forgotten that one living soul
  Outweighs the world—a fact that's always true;
Forgot that man's a gain, that ages roll
  From that which lives eternal, born anew
With every birth it beareth. We but see
What's bought with money, Soul and Deity
Are at a discount. We can thrive
Without those holy faiths that kept our sires alive.

Yet fades this glory not with mode of man;
  As vegetation pierces the hard mould
Of beaten highways, springs and grows where ran
  The dray and chariot, brightening with its gold
The wastes of nature: so this holy power
Keeps in life's beaten ways, alive, the flower
Of living piety, which frames our ways
To the pure passion of diviner days.

God, in a nation's midst, a people's hearts;
  His spirit interfused with every breath;
His righteousness their life; 'tis this imparts
  The genius of Progression. God and Death
Are opposites forever—He's the free;
Loosing within the world continually
The springs of nobler being—that great life
Which makes great Seers' hearts with great hopes
    rife.

Earth darkens but to doubters; all its laws,
  By laws sublimer still, are check'd and bound;
Our lives are part effects, and part a cause,
  By something better than themselves still crowned.

There's a great Soul that sleeps not with our sleep,
That rests not with our resting; and its deep
Unuttered sympathies, immortal powers,
Work their own wonders still, despite of ours.

Oh spirits of dead centuries! reverent, wise,
  Brave, active, generous, fraught with all that's blest,
The Soul that nurtured yours within us lies;
  We have your longings vast, at times your rest;
And we, as you,—our apathies apart—
Have wants and woes within us—a full heart
Of something vast, unspoken—something wise,
Which through the darkness still sustains our eyes.

Ye did not rest; rest was not in your souls;
  Thought throned your spirits, thought and purpose
    crowned;
And ye kept onward, onward still as rolls
  Time's dusty chariot, neither barred nor bound;
And we, when we are blest, 'tis when we keep
The rugged path of duty, stern and steep;
'Tis when we toil for Progress, when our souls
Mount with Time's mounting, roll as still it rolls.

O how from Time's abyssmal deeps ye rise,
  Calm, grand, majestic, all imprest with thought—
The shining brow serene, the burning eyes,
  And the whole frame divinely wrapt and wrought:
Embodied motion, stars of living light
Ye made; we feel, forever darkness bright;
Made earth and Time diviner, men more blest,
The beauty of your souls in theirs exprest.

Ye have no name nor place in all our lore,
  Forgot by e'en tradition's garrulous tongue;
But ye—oh could we know you!—evermore
  War with us against evil foes of wrong;
Your breath is still upon us, still we feel
Faint whispers of your glories through us steal;
Faint whispers of your thinkings; your great heart
With time still blending, still its noblest part.

And when our hearts, unresting, seek pure peace;
  When the tide overflows them of pure thought;
When the world's noisy tongues that hold us cease,
  And all the troubled soul to rest is wrought:

'Tis then your spirit, greater than our own,
Which thrills us with a sense of things unknown,
Which folds us in a glory, that makes bright
Our fleeting moments, with Eternal Light.

PROGRESS.

SECOND BOOK.

PART FIRST.

O thou who ne'er hast learnt, that Love's a power
  Above all knowledge—first, not next to it,
Thou hast no part in Progress; for the hour
  Of the world's beauty thou hast nothing fit;
Thy name shall ne'er be honoured, nor men see
Laurel or myrtle crown bestowed on thee;
Thy strength is weakness, and thy life is death,
And all of thee shall perish with thy breath.

Thou lack'st what heaven would lack without its stars;
  Thou lack'st what earth would lack without its sea—
The power creative; Knowledge hath its bars,
  But Love, like light, is as the morning free;

And where it is, there gentle thoughts increase,
Subduing discord, and inspiring peace—
Peace in whose presence scorn and hatred die,
And man grows nobler, as he grows more high.

'Tis love! sweet Love! the sacred flame of home,
  Soft kindled in the breast of sire and child,
That follows man where'er his footsteps roam,
  Requickening in him virtues pure and mild;
Filled with this power, he glows, and lives, and feels;
It in his soul the genius kind unseals,
Gives him new being; life's not life, till Love,
Quickening the chaos, moves its deeps above.

Love civilized the world in its young dawn,
  Ere temple, tower, or town begirt the plain;
And 'tis from Love, pure Love, that still are drawn
  The powers divine that its pure life sustain.
Where'er man lights his fire, or spreads his bed,
There influences to bless the world are shed;
There heart grows warm to heart, and life to life,
And healing flows for all the wounds of strife.

Love tames the savage in his leafy lair,
  Tames man, than he full oft more fierce and wild,
In civil cities. Love hath virtues rare,
  And makes, where'er it comes, an Eden mild;
Could it all influence, it would all restore,
Regenerate, lighten, bless for evermore:
Its look, its word, are the immeasured sense
Of all Heaven's beauty, and its affluence.

O Love! pure Love! the poor man's guide and strength!
  Soul of his hope! the bringer of his rest!
Could'st thou rule all, as rule thou must at length,
  The whole round world should in thy sway be blest;
Then toil should be ennobled, and thought free,
And Freedom all the world's, from sea to sea;
Then poor men should be pure, and rich men just,
And equal laws be all men's equal trust.

Knowledge has tried her hand, with doubtful skill,
  To save the nations, and to guide the race;
But Love, long lingering, modest, pure, and still,
  Shall in the future share her lofty place.

All Nature's ways are simple—simple sweet;
She brings far-wandering man to Duty's feet,
Not by harsh precepts, formulas, and fears,
But by soft whispers, melting smiles, and tears.

And Love is Nature, nature always right,
  The heavenly instinct of the eternal soul;
Soft as the common sun, as it as bright,
  It makes the common world in beauty roll.
All words are vain, all rules but empty wind,
Where Love, soft lighting, leaves no trace behind;
It touches hearts, and saves them, and its rest,
The sabbath of the soul, makes all hearts blest.

O bright the day for earth, when Love shall be
  Crown'd in its beauty; when the child's soft voice,
Instinct with heaven, shall in the man's heart free
  Still make, where'er he comes, the earth rejoice;
When woman's heart, high, faithful to its end,
The soul of wisdom, shall with wisdom blend;
When men shall leave their books, and through long hours,
Hear what God teaches in the sun and flowers.

The world's but yet in childhood; all the years
  The long dim ages of earth's fossil folds,
Have not sufficed to teach the mundane spheres
  The grand incipient truth the child's heart holds.
Once charactered, at length the world it thrilled,
Its glory in a gracious Life fulfilled;
But yet its grandeurs linger, sad and slow,
Its fuller eras rise, and lingering grow.

The prison still is built, and moulded still
  The clanking chain, which makes the bad still
    worse;
But still that power waits which must fulfil
  In woman's seed the serpent's final curse.
Love waits, and sorrow ripens, and sin grows,
And earth lacks beauty, as it lacks repose;
Lacks peace and blessing, and must lack them still,
Unless, Love coming, the sweet measure fill.

O Love, the strength of earth! the life of life!
  Thou art for all men, and all men for thee;
The wicked and the woeful, men of strife;
  The rich man and the poor, the bond and free:

Thou fill'st the heart of each, and each is blest;
Thou giv'st thyself to all, and all find rest;
Evil within thy presence is no more,
But good is perfect, and that good is sure.

Submitted unto Love, the world were blest;
  Submitted unto Love, the world were free;
'Tis hate and scorn that curse it, in its breast
  Plant the dark seeds of shame and infamy.
Love saves where'er it comes, saves where it seems
To operate but vainly; Love's sweet dreams,
Songs of the spirit, floating through the night,
Still keep the sense of heaven in all hearts bright.

'Tis never vanquished Love; Love never fails;
  Over all powers 'tis victor, first or last;
Baffled in health, it comes when pain assails,
  And binds with its sweet precepts the heart fast.
Who has not seen the rebel heart brought low
Beneath its tender accents, the soft glow
Of its forgiving gaze, or by the bland,
Assuring pressure, of its tender hand?

Oh, we've too many words, too many forms;
  Our wisdom's weak, for want of Love's sweet power;
'Tis the kind look, the word, that inly warms
  The heart with Love, that bring's forth virtue's flower.
The orat'ry the human spirit wants,
Is not the orat'ry the schoolman vaunts;
The looks and words of tender hearts and eyes
Are the sweet orat'ry that makes life wise.

A little child might lead us; we are dark,
  And, in the future, children's lore shall be
The element of healing, the blest mark
  Of highest wisdom, sweetest sanctity.
Then shall God's kingdom come—the spirit mild
That thinks no evil, in a little child;
That is heaven's spirit, and that spirit free,
Shall, in the future, earth's restorer be.

Good never fails where Love is; the weak heart
  Of man fails often, and his passions grow
Proud, towering in their might, with ready art,
  To darken reason with their dazzling show;

But Love, Love in him, e'en while Reason sleeps,
Love in his heart his better nature keeps;
Fills it with thoughts divine, with fancies mild,
And makes the daring man in fear a child.

Love is the strength of presence; it brings back
  To hearts that wander, the sweet mother's eye,
The father's smile of love, that happy knack
  Of wordless praising, which made praise so high.
Home, the sweet strength that still restrains the heart,
Is present still where Love in thought hath part;
Present to bless, to strengthen, to restrain,
And make the heart that falters, firm again.

Or old or new, born with the coming day,
  Or born of days long gone, a memory sweet,
Love works the same pure uses, in its ray—
  The genial power which makes the soul complete—
All graces flourish fair, all manners sweet
Add their sweet instincts unto hands and feet;
All speech grows fitter, fairer, and all thought
With more of gladdening sense of truth is fraught.

'Tis love inspires the genius, weak and poor;
  'Tis love makes bright his thought, and holds it fast
To the sweet dreams of hope that evermore
  Haunt his sad spirit with their glories vast.
He loves, and toil is lightened, and his heart
Feels from its trembling deeps his fears depart.
He loves, and all his spirit, strong and pure,
Springs equal to his need—to that or more.

'Twas thus with West, when on his glowing cheek
  He felt his mother's kiss—the first and best—
No longer dark and dull, no longer weak;
  His soul leapt up, by heavenly genius prest.
It quicken'd him all o'er; his ready hand
Grew strong in dexterous forces of command;
It thrilled his spirit, and his rising thought
The fruitful genius of creation caught.

The homes of England still are England's strength;
  'Tis there the child in gentle manners taught,
Love in his soul, well fortified, at length
  Becomes the man in piety and thought;

'Tis there he hears the Bible; there he sees
His father, wise and pure, upon his knees;
'Tis there he learns just action, hears wise thought,
And gains the life with which his years are fraught.

Centres of strength; the abodes of peace and rest,
  Apportion'd well by kindly-thoughted Care;
These homes are England's safeguard—powers blest,
  Which keeps the world within her firm and fair;
School'd there! most sweetly school'd by forces
    mild,
From paths of pleasure vain, and ease beguiled;
'Tis there her sons, calm-hearted, earnest, true,
First learn the art they thrive in—to subdue.

O Intimate of heaven! O cheerer sweet!
  O Light of lowly homes! O Living Power!
Thou mak'st life's winter fair, and in thy heat
  Soft flushing through the soul springs many a
    flower;
The cheerful daisy, sweet of life's repose,
Oft 'merging fair from life's long wintry snows;
Hope's fragrant violet, and with it more bright
The gladdening celandine of home delight.

What were the world without thee? O thou star
  Of mortal bliss, far wand'ring o'er the night
That comes and goes o'er man—thy radiant car,
  The sun of endless spheres, makes all hearts bright.
Constant as morn, as intimate as day,
Falls thy reviving smile, thy quickening ray—
Thou giv'st the heart what fills it, and thy light
Makes the dull spheres of mortal darkness bright.

O Love! O weeping Love! Redeemer sweet,
  'Tis at thine altars that we cancel sin;
'Tis at thy altars that our weary feet
  Their highest march of heavenly duty win.
We worship there, and all the guilt of years—
Remitting doubt, and darkness, disappears;
We worship there, and every star-crown'd thought
Into sweet certainty of life is wrought.

O rich in filial love! O rich in power
  Of piety ennobling, calm and grand!
England, thy name, a strength in peril's hour,
  A word that honour owns on every strand,

Is great from love's pure beauty in thee meet,
To every need that makes the soul complete;
No other powers but those that prosper there,
Such life inspiring, or such merit fair.

There prospers Genius fair; there Science smiles;
  There Knowledge springs abundant, knowledge best,
And there, with increase fair, the honoured files
  Of modern glory to the old are prest.
Nor is there lack of virtue, or of worth,
Of courteous manners, or of genial mirth,
Or any good whate'er, that firm and free,
Or strengthens truth, or prospers purity.

It needs no heart of flame, no tongue of fire,
  To tell the wonder of the Briton's power;
It flows in each sweet look, each sweet desire,
  Born of the current of the common hour;
Born of sweet social quiet, when the heart,
Like some small stream that keeps the hills apart,
Cut off from noise, and tumult, and wild care,
Spends its whole bounty on the common air.

Who knows not England with its thousand towns,
  And villages unnumbered, where mute toil,
Safe from the world's dull discord or its frowns,
  Tills with mute gladness the luxuriant soil?
There Freedom reigns and Peace, and there their
    root
Philanthropies incipient start and shoot.
The love which gladdens households ripening there
To tenderness like heaven's, which all hearts share.

'Twas England first, with her great tender heart,
  A heart to human instincts ever true,
That brought to mind the bondsman doomed apart,
  To wear the slave's vile chain, and hatred too.
Far from him still, she saw him weak, opprest,
And all his cruel wrongs her soul possesst;
Nor did she rest till from his infamy,
A man like others, she had set him free.

The land above all other! Love's sweet strength,
  Source of a thousand fruits—a life divine—
Has in our England greatly blessed at length,
  Made the world's onward Progress fairer shine.

Who knows what Love has fostered, or what wrought?
What form she lives in, or what life her thought?
Where rests her spirit? or in what her grace,
Life's primal glory, hath its power and place?

The sweet "God bless you" of the parting hour;
  The parting looks and words—the lovers' gold,
Told o'er and o'er with all their fervid power,
  Through years of absence—these are things that hold
The heart to purest virtue, these are powers
Which consummate their beauty—Love's sweet flower—
In life heroic, in that purpose fair
Which gladdens all men, blesses everywhere.

In every heart are garnered memories sweet,
  Sweet tokens of a life that once was pure;
Some far-off misty sweetness—pleasure fleet,
  Some glory faint that gladdens evermore.
Love's a cheap blessing! and the homeliest head
Was once soft cradled, smiles around it shed,
With careful eyes about it, and quick ears,
And all a mother's sweetness and her fears.

Deep in the heart, through years of sinful life,
  The mother's heart, deep ruling, still has power;
The voice that's hush'd the cradle through Time's strife,
  Holds meek dominion still o'er every hour:
'Tis that which guides and blesses, that which keeps
The giddy wanderer on the world's high steeps;
And that, 'tis that, that in his wild despair
Prompts in his soul the soft repentant prayer.

Life still surmounts the past, where'er it finds
  A love still hopeful—that with tender care;
Scattering its follies to the passing winds,
  Still pity sweet approves, and still sweet prayer,
It spreads new courage through the heart, to think
That other hearts have hopes, tho' its may sink;
That other hearts can pray, while its own prayer
Grows faint and languid, and provokes despair.

Love comes to Virtue's aid with powers from heaven,
  Builds up the trembling wish, the hope infirm;
And in the heart unsteadfast and uneven
  Unfolds by sure degrees good's slumbering germ.

Ill has o'er it no power: where ill hath been,
It spreads but softer still its silvery sheen
Of influences divine, of tender care,
Which still bring comfort, still allay despair.

And Love is sweet for ever! that dear power
  Which lays sweet kisses on the baby cheek,
Bringing forth penitence—Hope's tender flower,
  And soothing all the soul with raptures meek,
Is gracious still through all things, still imparts
Its own soft effluence to ungentle hearts;
Still bringing forth, through all the lapsing years,
E'en as at first, contrition's quickn'ing tears.

Love is of heaven, and still fulfils Heaven's will!
  It frees the heart, and gives it skill to seek
The gentle ways of goodness, ways which fill
  The souls that tread them with dominion meek.
Sin's blind, and still brings blindness; but Love's
power
Is still uplifting, light'ning; o'er the flower
Of human hope divine enkindled sweet
It casts new beauties, makes its light complete.

So grows up social kindness, so man feels
  The instinct of his species in him still,
Which by its outcries wild, its sweet appeals,
  Binds man to man, despite the wandering will;
Binds man to man, upbuilding States and Powers
With the sweet substance that makes mortal hours
Run on divinely—the sweet power of Love,
The soul of earth, as well as heaven above.

O Love! O holy Love! the flame is thine
  That kindles vital action; man can know
No gracious thought, no sentiment divine,
  Till love burns in him; makes his graces flow.
Warmed with thy power, the meanest of the race
Feels half a hero in the world's dull face;
And he—the meanest—man inert, supine,
Glows half a god beneath thy gladdening shine.

'Tis what man is, what he has lived and loved,
  That makes him what he will be; love is life,
The love that through long years his soul has proved,
  In silent suffering, and in active strife;

Our years are self-begotten; still the past
With all it owns is in the future cast;
Its loves, its pure still loves, like things of heaven,
Making the changeful future smooth and even.

Man's life's its root in love, in home, in wife,
  In sire, in little child; by turns each rules
In the sweet area of domestic life,
  Where still the babe the lettered grandsire schools.
The hand that holds our own, the voice that shares
Our daily converse or our Sabbath prayers;
The voice of child, or wife, or sire, or friend,
That is the voice, the hand, to which we bend.

'Tis then man first looks up, when first he loves;
  A dolt before, he's now all ears and eyes,
And thought and speech besiege him, and he moves
  All sorts of people with a glad surprise;
No more he hides his head, no more mute fear
Keeps him a bond of her dark-vision'd sphere,
But bright and active, a pure orb of light,
He shines down all time's darkness, all time's night.

Heaven lifts man up by ways to man unknown,
  Makes him its own by things that he might scorn,
Were they not his life's life, did they not grow
  From his own nature, of that nature born.
His helpless babe, best treasure of his home,
Heaven's new sent Saviour, meekly to him come,
Makes him—a churl before, a heathen rude—
A meek-ey'd Christian, generous, wise, and good.

Love's soul and substance are religious still;
  She lights the cottar's floor, all bare and dark,
With rays direct from heaven, makes softly thrill
  His pondering spirit with Faith's heavenly spark.
Not two, but one—Love and Religion fair,
They still uplift man's hope, still soothe his care,
Still free his soul from evil, still sustain
His fainting spirit through life's toil and pain.

Sweet unto him are all things in whom sweet
  The enkindling breath of love, pure born, has been;
Incense flows round his head, and at his feet
  A world lies beauteous, heaven in every scene.

He hears the choirs of morn, eve's songs of peace;
He sees the pageant of the years increase;
And with a bliss swift charm'd, a heart soft thrill'd,
His trembling soul is with sweet rapture filled.

The poor man's cottage, and his garden ground,
  Where marjoram, and thyme, and cowslips grow—
That little plot which, all the season round,
  Is crown'd with rustic brightness, sweet, tho' low—
Yields him and his, pure-loving, generous, blest,
As sweet a pleasure, and as pure a rest
As the grand mansion, or the proud parterre,
Nor less inspire his thought and make it fair.

Religion's born of love, serene and meek,
  She keeps life's common way, most often there
Where sorrow strews her snows, and sad and weak
  Man seeks her comforts as he needs her care.
There with the thoughts that mingle as they flow
With life's familiar voices rude and low,
She utters all her soul, with gentle heat
Of tranquil pleasure making all hearts beat.

O gentle Love! life's civilizer sweet,
  Where'er thou com'st, to rich men's homes or poor,
There spring all gentle virtues, there still meet
  The triple graces that make spirits pure.
The hind unlettered and untutor'd knows—
Where love, sweet ruling, her sweet spirit shows—
What knowledge fails too often to impart,
The heavenly teachings of a loving heart.

O when shall life with love all permeate,
  Enrich'd with that which blesses life's best wealth,
Bring forth the glories of its Eden state,
  And yield the hopes and happiness of health?
When shall man, cheer'd with peace, love's constant
    guest,
Share 'mid earth's turmoil heaven's eternal rest,
And, glad and blest himself, to all impart
The priceless pleasure of a happy heart?

Love lives in man, and lo! his plagues depart;
  Love lives in nations, and they rise to heaven,
Rule earth unto its centre, the great heart
  Whence flows the life which to the world is given.

'Twas Christ's sweet spirit first on Judah's hills
Which gave the impulse which still thrills and fills
The earth with peace and gladness; and that land
Has blest all nations with its histories bland.

And 'tis the Christs among us, the rare few,
  Poor men full oft who live in unknown spheres,
Patient, laborious, upright, tender, true,
  Heaven in their hearts through all the lapsing years,
That make our England great, that keep her fast,
Safe anchor'd still through each successive blast
Of threat'ning danger, of imperill'd fate,
To the proud glories of her ancient state.

. . . . . .

Springs from the soil the daisy clean and fresh;
  The rivers pour their psalms upon the air;
The willow brightens through the tangled mesh
  Of last year's shoots, along the hedgerows fair.
Nature revives again at Spring's soft breath,
And where chill Winter fettered life with death,—
Lord of the landscape, victor of the plain—
The sun but smiles, and earth is free again.

So 'tis with Love, the love that heaven bestows
  On hearts long winter'd with a grim despair,
And bound like earth, with all the wint'ry woes
  That spread decay and desolation there:
Its breath is life, the life that to hope gives
The sacred element in which she lives;
Its strength is freedom, and the fettered heart
But feels its smile, and all its woes depart.

O Love! soft smiling, heaven descended, blest!
  Parent of peace and Science! earth's best friend!
'Tis thou must give the troubled nations rest,
  'Tis in thy smile the woes of man must end.
Like the green spring, alive with bright'ning breath—
With power far stronger than the dark'ning death
Of chill demeaning winter—bright and warm,
'Tis thy soft presence still that stills the storm.

And 'tis thy hand, serene, diffusing bright,
  Soft beams of heavenly mildness, gentle, free,
That yet must give earth's darken'd myriads light,
  That yet must make long blinded darkness see.

Soft in thy nature, as in earth's soft breast,
Through all the long bare winter frost depressed,
Lie things of marvellous beauty, light most rare,
Which yet must bless the earth and make it fair.

The life of earth, 'tis but in thy decay
  That the quick natural sense of truth departs,
And man grows blind, an alien from the ray
  That lights and guides and blesses saintly hearts.
Life has no shadows dark, no doubts obscure;
Around the cotter's hearth, before his door,
He loves, and in his soul, faith, like a star,
Rays down heaven's glories, bright'ning heaven afar.

His children grow like flowers; within their hearts,
  Soft sunn'd by influences forever bright,
A power of loving which, like flowers, imparts
  Vitality to the sweet gift of sight.
Earth is not dark to them, nor sad, nor vain,
They, from its golden sky and purple plain,
Still gather thoughts of good, a nurture sweet,
A bright belief that makes Time's sorrows fleet.

The gray hair'd matron of the village wears
  Upon her brow, and in her sunny eyes—
Surviving all her toils and all her cares—
  The gentle smile of childhood, bright but wise.
Love in her breast—the love that saves and keeps,
Soft curtain'd deeply where sweet memory sleeps—
Has made her heart, like a perennial flower,
A changeless brightness on each changeful hour.

And he, her spouse, the lad who held her hand
  In village games, full fifty years ago,
When altogether, in the evenings bland,
  They play'd quaint dramas, standing all a row;
His eye is bright as hers, its softening ray,
Beneath his once fair locks, now chang'd to grey,
Still brightening like a sunbeam glad and free,
Despite of toil and care and poverty.

No avarice is here with venom'd fang,
  Slow poisoning all the sweets and loves of life;
No hydra mammon that with needless pang,
  Of o'ertasked labour stirs up needless strife.

Fair as the sky, and free as its broad bounds,
Sweet link'd to Love, their lives run happy rounds;
Their duties done in meekness, mix'd with fear,
Soft, raising meanness even to grandeur's sphere.

Nor are their lives inutile; 'tis from these
  Our Country's Patriot and its Hero springs;
Deep-rooted worth within them, scorning ease,
  Still from their stock a race of honour brings.
They are the Great Ones of our country's sires,
Around their guileless hearths, their genial fires,
Virtue erect and stern, to Heaven allied,
Still rears her chosen champions, England's pride.

Where the fair Clyde, the pride of Scotland, wends
  In tortuous beauty to the Atlantic's side,
And all the isle-clad sea in beauty bends
  Before the cliff-crowned coast in stately pride;
There in a home obscure, yet sweetly warm
With that sweet power that brightens sorrow's storm,
Brave Livingstone was born, Discovery's last
And greater Park in Afric's deserts vast.

And yet on the same coast, nor separate far,
  Of earlier fame, but yet of kindred worth,
Invention's best loved child, The Morning Star
  Of modern Progress, found his home and birth;
There Watt, the meditative, sickly child,
Coy nursling of a home of graces mild,
Grew up, and with him the steam engine grew,
The world's last greatest marvel and most true.

And say, ye banks of Tyne, black with the blast
  Of many centuried mines, yet passing sweet
Where'er the daisy gains fair leave to cast
  Its eye to heaven, along the vale's retreat;
Did ye not rear your glory and your pride
Among your hamlets small, and by your side,
The stalwart Stephenson, whom Science blest
And rarely gifted, on a lowly breast?

Genius, with smiling eye and heaven-turn'd brow,
  And wing still poised for new and varied flights,
Most often from the workshop or the plough,
  Calls the Elishas who shall tread her heights.

These nurs'd in poverty, keen-visioned, warm
With love's soft effluence, mid its fiery storm,
Feel her enchantments sweet, her service blest,
And her long labours an eternal rest.

Within their hearts, as in the heart of earth,
  When the new violet of the year first peeps
Forth from the soil, above the winter's dearth,
  Bright'ning the air on which its beauty sleeps,
They feel hope's softening sweetness doubly blest,
Amid life's darkening storms and rude unrest,
And yield beneath its beam, fruitful, though poor,
Those matchless marvels which make Progress sure.

O lightening winged faith, thy pinions blest,
  Caressing ages dim to mortal sight,
Have found a period of eternal rest,
  A time of peace and joy and love and light.
That time shall Genius bring, the Genius blest,
Which draws its nurture from Love's sacred breast;
The love Religion bears—calm, trustful, wise—
Its hopes still drawn from heaven, where rest its
    eyes.

. . . .

God of the sunshine, Thou who bring'st the spring,
  White wing'd and fresh, from out the winter's dark,
Quick'ning the woods, and loosening the bound wing
  Of the soft mavis, and the sprightly lark;
And making earth again, o'er hill and field,
The treasured sweetness of its heart to yield;
Lift up love's fallen banners, . .

Content still dwells with love, and peace, soft nursed
  By humble virtue—labour's smiling bride,—
The softener of his cares, and still the first,
  Best, dearest treasure of his sweet fireside.
Loud howl the winds without, dark grows the night,
But no mean terrors him or his affright:
His treasures are at home, and thanks and prayer,
Soft uttered in the soul, alone are there.

Wealth, mind diseased and madden'd, sick at heart,
  Piqued at all corners, vexed with trifles small;
Its devious course dark limn'd on folly's chart,
  Restless and shifty as a juggler's ball;

Knows nothing of the easeful spirit caught
From life-long labours, where the peaceful thought,
With good conversing, unremittent flows
Amid the placid pleasures love bestows.

Sweet and fantastic as the wreath that's wove
  Along the labouring path, from hill to hill;
When the sweet summer, songful in the grove,
  Recalls her choirs and wakes her music shrill:
Is that sweet wreath that love delighting weaves,
Of simple things incongruous—buds and leaves;
Of homely thought familiar, springing fair
Along the rugged paths of workday care.

Sorrow and Grief, and Care, the Phœnix grim,
  That springs from its own ashes, never dead;
Love crowns with garlands fair, their shadows dim
  Sweet softening with the odours from them shed.
And all life's ills, whatever pain impels,
She twines with flowers or wreathes with silver bells;
Her presence, like the rainbow on the cloud,
Brightening the dark with which man's soul is bowed.

Go where you will, 'tis Love distributes bliss,
Hope's friend and ally; from her cheerful eyes
She sheds a beauty like the sun's warm kiss,
That gladdens all the world and makes it wise.
Sin feels that beauty, and within her heart
Despair's long threatening clouds of terror part;
And Fear, of haggard form and hectic cheek,
Grows calm within that brightness, calm and meek.

Like the bright daisy of the common fields,
Springing, heaven nurtur'd, where'er suns arise,
Love, her sweet powers, her soothing sweetness yields,
A common bounty 'neath the common skies.
You cannot hear her foot, 'tis soft and still;
But whereso'er she comes, comes help for ill;
Her hands, like fair twin rivers, bearing sweet
The elements of health to all men's feet.

What shall be match'd with Love in sovereign Power?
The Sun were a fit emblem; but the night
Is ever with it, closing the sweet flower,
And darkening the soft skies which it made bright.

Love has no night, its day unending flows,
One long sweet sabbath of divine repose,
Which no dark night invades; its loveliness
Still bright in beauty, still with power to bless.

Simple and humble, bound to hearth and home,
  As its stronghold and fortress, its high tower,
Like the small seed that seeketh heaven's dome,
  From out the rock's deep heart, Love yet hath power;
The power to rend in its fair upward course,
The darkening formulas of fear and force;
To shatter powers despotic gathered fast,
On the dark crown of the dark visaged past.

Gently, most gently, through each day and hour,
  Love makes her pathways straight to ends divine,
Thrilling the chasms dark of Gothic power,
  With the soft rays that from her eyes decline;
And like a flower, her crown of glory bright,
Shall reach, ere long, in all its gracious light,
The pinnacles of law, and on their face
Imprint the nobler beauty of its grace.

And in the temple, yet again, her voice—
  Simple and childlike, soft and free from guile—
Shall wake a glory that shall hearts rejoice,
  And make its ruin'd aisles and altars smile.
And yet again the cup—her cup —shall pass
The solemn sacramental gladdening glass,
Of heavenly hope diffusive, stirring fair
The holy music Mercy maketh there.

Through every field she moves a conquering queen,
  As she has moved for ages up Time's night;
Chasing from off the earth the shadows mean,
  Of Hate, and Pride, and Scorn, that blast her light.
Nor has she thought, but like a seed shall yield,
In full perfection, on Time's varied field,
The beauty it enshrines—the law or life,
Or worships pure with which its depths are rife.

Love, in the form of a Religion pure—
  The blest Religion of the Crucified—
Has all the world redeemed, and evermore
  Her paths shall prosper—hers, and none beside.

What man essays for her still gives him rest,
And life, where'er she lives, is glad and blest;
The whole round earth in blessing yielding free,
Her harvests full for her prosperity.

'Tis round the blazing ingle of the poor—
  Where Innocence sits radiant, crown'd with smiles,
And Hospitality, with open door,
  The weary wanderer from his woe beguiles,—
That Love's full power is known; the Miracle
Of having nothing, yet of being full;
Of feeding others, yet of being fed
With that which them has warm'd and comforted.

There Thought, unconscious of her arduous way,
  Pursuing Misery's track, with pitying grace,
Finds all unskill'd in Science, the pure ray
  That lights the pallid darkness of her face;
Finds, further, what by man has ne'er been found
With eyes by apathy and harshness bound,
That that soft ray, the soul of heavenly light,
Can bring hope's morning out of Sin's dark night.

The passions and the follies of mankind,
  Which, like the hemlock and the aconite,
Diffuse, destructive, over all the mind,
  Their power to deaden and destroy its might,
Invade not Love's abode; she has a charm,
Which keeps the generous seed of virtue warm
Through all adversities, and its sweet flower
Sheds its soft odours through her every hour.

Blest are the guests of Love; her floor invites—
  Though but of sanded stone or red tiles warm—
Sweet visitants who, with their meek delights
  Of gentle pleasure, all the long day charm,
And even the silent night—for where they rest,
Each hour is happy, every season blest;
Night's brightening visions, as the day's soft charm,
Diffusing through the soul a pleasure warm.

There genial mirth discourses all day long,
  Finding successive, in the varying hours,
Occasion sweet for the soft warbled song
  Or cheerful laughter, native of her bowers;

Nor flies she with the sun, each happy morn,
Soft with the dawn she wakes her golden horn,
Enlivening all the air, and spreading round
A cheerful current of reviving sound.

Love has no lonely days, over the spheres
  Of heavenly powers delightful, she holds sway;
Evoking thence, as Time brings smiles or tears,
  The ministrant most apt to bless her way.
Hence is she always blest, hence at her doors
Each passing hour its urn of beauty pours;
Her days, whate'er befall, still wreath'd and crowned
With comely graces all the long year round.

Nor has she graces only at her feet,
  Sweet sober virtues, calm of eye and heart,
To heaven devoted, filled with generous heat,
  Of noble emulation bear their part.
There Piety—enthusiast of the skies—
Sits meekly reverent, with heaven-raptured eyes;
And there soft Pity, moved by every woe,
Lets her sweet tears and sweeter blessings flow.

And there calm Patience waits where these abide,
  Love's gracious daughter, as her mother fair;
She draws the sinful from their sins aside,
  By ceaseless pity and by ceaseless prayer;
No fear appalls her, no offence offends,
She still calm smiles with her calm counsels blends,
The morrow still, her morrow, spite of care,
Rising from out the darkness clear and fair.

Nor is fair candour wanting in that throng—
  Candour of open brow and steady eye,—
The eldest born of Truth, whose generous tongue
  Brightens the heart of struggling poverty;
She looks on rising genius with a heart
That bears in all his fears and pains a part,
Awarding to him still, what still belongs
To lowly merit, vex'd by scornful tongues.

There, too, comes bustling Labour, all aglow
  With native health, which but with life declines;
Her temples garlanded with row on row
  Of clustering corn, or flower that 'mong it twines.

Light is her step, and gay and bright her song,
Filling the valleys low the whole day long;
And when night comes, folding her shadows deep
O'er the blue concave; sweet is then her sleep.

Oh, pale-faced Woe and Want, come here reside,
  For Plenty still stands smiling at Love's door;
And Wretchedness still brightens where abide
  These generous virtues—guardians of the poor.
Nor can the uplifting thought—the thought that wings
Hope's better counsels, when she soars and sings,
With heavenward flight aspiring, bright and warm—
Be wanting there where these sweet virtues charm.

Here, like Cromarty's mason, vexed and sad,
  Chilled by the blasts of wintry poverty;
Or Nature's simple Bard—the village lad,
  Who sang the "Farmer's Boy" in numbers free.
Mild Poverty may learn, aspiring, meek,
Her fancies sweet in numbers pure to speak;
Or fashion them creative into forms,
Whose beauty still inspires the heart it warms.

So Chantrey, smit with beauty, the pure form
  Of breathing life around him,—while he plied
The milkboy's task ungenial, 'mid the storm,—
  With rugged charcoal his young genius tried.
Art in his bosom still her way pursued
Her untaught, humble course, by methods rude,
Till the crude thought matured, could think and plan,
And the poor genius rose the honoured man.

And where the Aire flows devious, crown'd with flowers
  The spirit of the moors through which it sweeps,
Its beauty adding grace to the fair bowers
  Of forest hamlets, on wild mountain steeps;
Priestley, the weaver's son, the orphan poor,
Made bright his life's young prime, untaught, obscure,
With knowledge all refined, its treasures rare
The sovereign solace of his heart's young care.

And Davy, prince of chemists, nurs'd amid
  The beetling cliffs of Cornwall, where the sea
Rolls its wild thunder on the coast unchid,
  The monarch of the scene it fills so free;

Davy, the miner's friend, himself still taught
With his own active hands, his busy thought;
His scanty means well supplemented still
With his own eager zeal and sturdy will.

And oh, ye myriad poets! humble, poor—
  The simple priests of Nature, with her still,—
Poets unknown to fame, whose numbers pure,
  Dear to the lowly, bless the hearts they thrill;
How have ye tuned your lyres unceasing, sweet,
While labour's stony ways have gall'd your feet;
Your lays still gay, type of your own calm souls,
Through all times lapses with each year that rolls.

. . . . . .

O fields and streams of England, ever fair,
  Whether by summer brightened, or depressed
By wintry winds, that lay your beauties bare,
  Changing the glory of your varied vest;
Great souls and rare, oft to the world unknown,
Have in your solitudes refresh'd their own;
Patient 'mid all things, strong amid all care,
While breathing the pure peace that prospers there.

Remember Wedgwood, ye who want a name
  To help you in your fears, aspirants weak;
He trod ambition's thorny ways to fame
  In his own rustic home, adventurer meek.
The wilds of Stafford, then almost a waste,
Grew flowers he loved, and there he schooled his
    taste;
His hope still feeding, where his fancy fed,
On the pure life and air around him spread.

And in the woodbine groves and vales of Don,
  Their poet still—still of them eloquent—
Nature's own peer, her true inspired son,
  The People's Bard, brave Elliot's life was spent;
He saw the wallflower, and its modest peer,
The polyanthus—to the rustic dear—
Brighten the cottage porch, and in his heart
He felt the fire of poesy's blest art.

Muse of the poor! 'twas Elliot caught thy strain,
  And all the oppressor's heaven at once grew dark,
But Liberty revived, her heart again
  Lighted and lifted by Hope's heavenly spark.

Rugged, yet sweet, in sympathy still strong,
The faithful minstrel pour'd the stormful song,
Till justice woke, and with her unsheathed sword
Enforced the Poet's and the Patriot's word.

The tardy wintry morn, with watery eye,
  Blear'd with chill mists, commingling with the dark,
Look'd forth o'er Derwent from a pallid sky,
  Through which the rising day had shot no spark;
The bare trees dripp'd; the slushy, cheerless road,
One lonely traveller alone bestrode;
But he sped onward, the foul morn's despite,
With step unmeasured, and an eye of light.

'Tis Hutton with his books, adventurer brave,
  The night will bring him back, his gains but small;
But poverty he heeds not, he's no slave,
  But Hope's brave champion, foremost of them all.
The iron town shall know him— city vast;
He'll aid her fortunes, re-create her past;
Be her brave son and servant, and her fame
Exalt and honour with his toils and name.

No college bred these men: they snatched their lore
  From books incongruous, in their hours of rest;
Their chambers the free fields, where evermore
  Thought made them welcome to her banquets blest.
Nor did they murmur that the impassive years
Sped on oblivious of their hopes and fears;
Theirs was the courage true, which works and waits,
Alike amid all seasons and all fates.

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